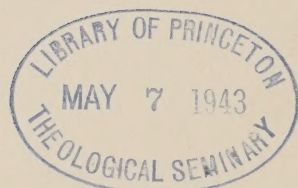


History  
of the  
Brethren in Christ Church

A. W. Climenhaga

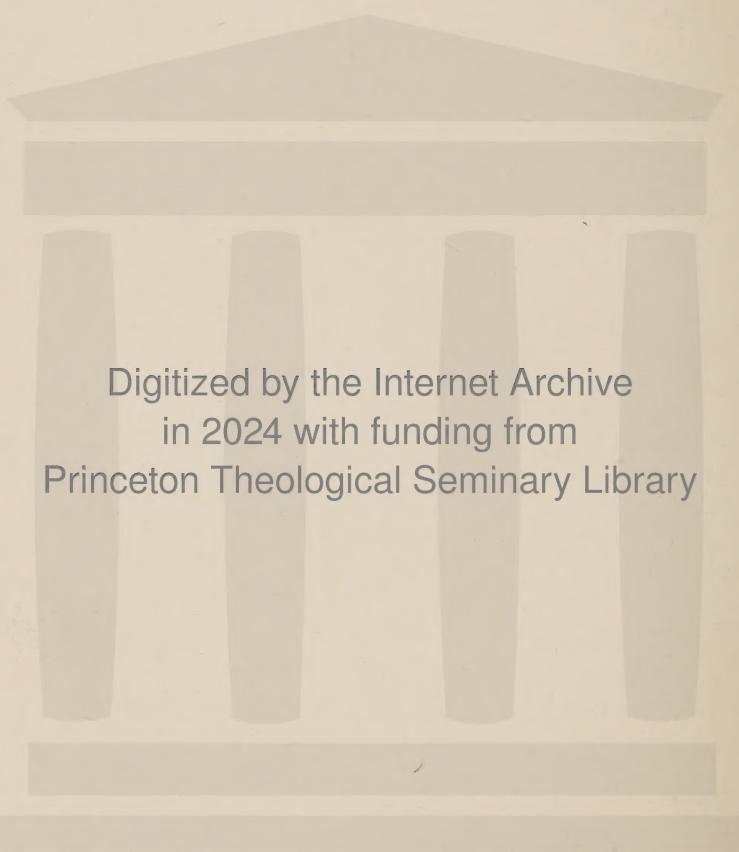




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# History of the Brethren in Christ Church









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# History of the Brethren in Christ Church

*By*

✓  
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TRAILAND HOMESTEAD

GRANTHAM, PENNSYLVANIA



E. V. PUBLISHING HOUSE

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



*To*  
*The Church Fathers*  
*of*  
*The Brethren in Christ Church*  
*Who Have Helped to Preserve for Us*  
*Our Faith in Jesus Christ*





## PREFACE

The experiences of a sincere group of followers of Jesus Christ are full of interest to most readers. The human race pays respect to those who have denied themselves so that they might live up to the principles dear to their hearts. The history of the Brethren in Christ Church is that of a people who have sought by example and precept to perpetuate the teachings of God's Word. From the origin of the church to the present the majority of the members of this body of believers have been worthy examples of their faith.

The purpose of this volume is to give a general account of this Communion. An effort is made to give the background as well as the development. Some sections of the organization are developed more fully than others. The purpose of this is not to give the reader the idea that the history of one local group is more worthy than that of another. Space will not permit a detailed discussion of each group. It should also be kept in mind that the mention of family names in the discussions is no proof that those given are the only worthy examples of this faith.

Most of the names used are those who were leaders in establishing a work, or held some important position at some period of not too recent date. For this reason, sections of the church which developed years back have a long line of leaders not mentioned. Districts, churches, and offices of more recent development result in names of leaders of the present being included.

James H. Snowden once said that a careful and conscientious historian proceeding in accordance with the laws of trustworthy historical investigation and composition does the following: "He collects his data and then sifts and digests it and puts it through the process of systematic examination. He then sets about writing in a methodical form, producing an orderly and logical history." This work is an attempt of this method. Some variations will be found.

The author, having collected materials over a period of twenty years, finds some information in his files with no designation of its source. A small amount of this may be copied almost word for word. It would be a pleasure to give credit to the original writers of such parts if the facts necessary to do so were known.

The work of writing this volume was started after a number of years of travel, research, and teaching of Church History. The task was to start at the beginning to collect material for the history of the Brethren in Christ Church. Whoever in the future attempts this task will have the advantage of viewing the development through the eyes of another. It is therefore expected that coming authors will do better work. The unique histories of the Christian Church so well organized and written have been made possible by some one paving the way.

Acknowledgment of indebtedness is made to the many friends of the Brethren in Christ Church who have assisted in gathering material for this work. The one worthy of the greatest recognition is Anna Elizabeth Climenhaga, my kind and helpful wife. Mrs. Climenhaga assisted in many ways, such as reading the manuscript, making corrections, and keep-

ing the surroundings conducive to organizing materials and writing.

The original copy of the history was written in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

THE AUTHOR.



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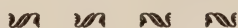
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# History of the Brethren in Christ Church





# The Brethren in Christ Church



## CHAPTER I

### EUROPEAN BACKGROUND

To explain the background of the Brethren in Christ Church, a brief statement concerning the Christian Church in general is necessary. The Christian Church, which started at Pentecost, has come through periods of conflict and periods of prosperity. At first her growth was rapid, and it appeared as though nothing could stand in her way. The early persecutions helped to spread the new Faith. The believers won converts wherever they went. The work grew like a grain of mustard seed. A little leaven seemed to leaven the whole lump.

The work had spread far and wide before any visible hindrance came. Her influence had reached the masses and had touched every walk of life. Then the Church made the mistake of dipping her snowy white hand into the world and defiling it. Her growth and influence had become so great that men entered the Church for the sake of office and gain rather than for their love for the Master and His cause. There could be only one result from such joining. The Church lost her purity and with it she lost her power. Instead of spiritual warmth and power, cold formalism was the result. Instead of a sincere spiritual leadership, there resulted a strong hierarchical development. Those at the head of the Church, instead

of being interested in her growth and spiritual welfare, became interested in personal gain and authority. For this reason the trend was toward building up an organization of great wealth and political power. The masses as well as the sincere worshippers lost interest. When they saw the Church did not have the power to help them, other means were sought. Monasteries arose in many places. This Monastic life seemed to be a way in which one could live pure and free from the world. The time came when the Church practically controlled everything and the masses were kept in darkness, and used only as tools to further the ends desired. Darkness settled over the world. The Church had lost her glow and ceased to light the way. However, amid the darkness, light began to break forth which led to the Reformation.

The period of reformation reached its height about 1500 A.D.; but all through the darkness a few lights were glimmering, though at times they were burning low. Gradually hearts became brave enough to express themselves against the evils in the Church. They felt that many things were contrary to the will of God, and should not be tolerated. The practice of penance and indulgences more than anything else seemed to stir thinking men. Penance was a discipline, or act of reparation or austerity, imposed by the priest after sacramental confession. As a sacrament it consisted of contrition, confession, and satisfaction, or penance on the part of the penitent and of absolution on the part of the confessor. Indulgence consisted of remission by those authorized, of the temporal or temporary punishment still due to sin after sacramental absolution, either in this world or in purgatory. That which stirred Luther was Tetzel's coming into the vicinity of Wittenberg and telling the people that as soon as their money was

put into the offering box their deceased friends would go to heaven. This means was being used to obtain money to build St. Peter's Church. This practice gave Luther courage to strike a blow at the powers which existed. While Martin Luther is the central figure of the reformation, he by no means stood alone. Neither is it fair to say that the spirit of the reformation and the desire for freedom started with Luther. Long before Luther took his stand, glimmering lights, in the form of groups of individuals, dared to speak their convictions.

It is with these particular groups that we are especially interested. In nearly every case these reformers stood for Apostolic simplicity and desired to return to Apostolic principles and practices. This, at least, was their aim. It was the best they could do with the light they had. It looked to them like the only possible way to redeem the freedom which man had lost. They wanted to shake off the bondage of the powers which held things in control and to worship God in spirit and in truth.

Among the different movements from the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries can be found such beliefs and doctrines as are now held by the body of believers known as the Brethren in Christ Church. By a careful study of the history of this particular body mentioned, the origin of its faith can be traced back to the above mentioned period. Such groups as the Waldensians, Moravians, Anabaptists, Mennonites, and Pietists interest us most. In these groups we find the heralds of the faith which is now held by this Church. These movements helped to put into the hearts of the people of that day a firm desire for liberty to worship God as they desired. Men

were willing to give their blood for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

After the reformation was past, people were still divided on what to believe and what practices to follow. Many of the common people who had spent their time in hard labor, instead of study, looked no longer to the Church for direction, but instead studied the Word of God for light to direct them. Luther's famous translation of the Bible into the German language made it possible for practically all the common people who understood this language to read for themselves. These masses of people who were reading the Bible in their own tongue and seeking satisfaction for their hungry hearts, ventured to interpret the Scriptures without help from any source. They were true and sincere at heart and without hypocrisy. They wanted the truth from Heaven if it was for them, or against them. They gathered together in services, reading and studying the Bible in their simple manner. They did not know the original languages, but they trusted their Heavenly Father to direct them aright. They felt that by a sincere study of the Word and through prayer, they could receive the proper interpretation.

The Pietists and the Anabaptists were made up to a great extent of this class. They were people of simple life and habits. They worked daily to provide for the necessary things of life, and spent what other time they had in service for God. These groups did not participate in the pleasures of their day, nor interest themselves in political affairs. The churches of the present time which believe in simplicity of dress to the extent that it seems peculiar to the people in general, had their origin in these movements. It is claimed by Dr. Fisher that the doctrines of the Plain Churches came about in the fol-



lowing way: Men whose heart's desire was to please God above everything else would read the Word and give such interpretation as they felt was correct. When the command to wash the Saints' feet was read, they did not hesitate nor question, but followed the command. What was true of this command was also true of other ordinances. When they came to the Scripture which said that one should be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, they believed what they read, and practiced as they understood (20).<sup>1</sup>

Due to much persecution many Pietists and Anabaptists came to America. The Brethren in Christ Church was born in the cradle of the faith of these who had left their mother country for a place where they could worship God as they desired. There have been a number of interpretations as to the origin of the Brethren in Christ Church in America, but laying these aside for the present, let us turn to a study of some of the movements mentioned, to trace a line of faith and belief which shall be enlightening as to this Church's origin.

WALDENSAINS. Few actual facts are known about these people. Very little literature was produced by them before the fifteenth century, and that which was written concerning them came largely from their opponents, and thus can hardly be considered reliable. Some have made an effort to trace the history of the Waldensians as far back as the time of Constantine. Other historians think they can be traced back to the time of the Apostles. It has been suggested that they were first found in Bulgaria. Some think they grew up dur-

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1. Sources of material are given in the bibliography in the back of this volume. Numbers appearing throughout the work in brackets refer to this bibliography.

ing the conflict between the East and West Churches and found a home among the Paulicians in Armenia. These Paulicians had some tenets of faith similar to the Waldensians. The Paulicians condemned clerical participation in civil government and the use of images. They had a simple form of church government. They claimed to be followers of Paul. They, however, rejected the Old Testament, and some of the Epistles of the New Testament.

Most historians do not write of the Waldensians as being before the great reformer, Peter Waldo. The birthplace of Peter Waldo is supposed to have been in Dauphine on the Rhone. He was a rich merchant of the city of Lyons. While attending a feast with other citizens of Lyons, a friend seated by his side fell dead. This experience caused Waldo to change his life and he became a consecrated follower of Jesus Christ. This event took place about 1160. The Bible became his rule of faith, and he sought to follow its teachings. In seeking to leave all for Jesus, he gave his house, fields, and vineyards to his wife and provided for his daughters. He gave of his means to help the needy. He had the Bible translated into the dialect of the Peasant classes so that they could read the Word for themselves. He spent his time traveling among the people, preaching the message of salvation. As converts were made, they likewise preached the Gospel to others. They sought to win all they could to a holy life.

The contrast between these "poor men of Lyons" as he and his converts were called, and the Mother Church was seen by the masses. Many of the Church leaders were corrupt, lazy, and immoral. They took the people's money and did not even speak to them in their own language. So the people turned with interest to the preaching of Waldo and his fol-

lowers. These preachers sacrificed for the sake of the Gospel and made no charge for their services. They spoke in the language of the people. When the Church demanded why they preached without authority, they said, "We ought to obey God rather than man." They were excommunicated from the Church, but nothing could stop them from preaching. The more they were persecuted, the more zealous they became for the Truth. The more the Church tried to stop them, the more they cried out against the existing evils. Their passion for the Scriptures could not be crushed. Their hope and faith was in the Book of books. They read the Bible and interpreted it literally. Not only did they try to get the Word into the hands of the people, but they also stood for the common priesthood of all believers. Besides interpreting the Word, they memorized many passages and repeated them to the people. They took a stand for private judgment in the interpretation of the Bible. They opposed the ecclesiastical authority and asserted the right of the layman. They were against oblation of the mass, oaths, hostility, begging, and capital punishment. On the point of baptism, they believed and practiced immersion. They rejected regeneration by baptism and also infant baptism. They believed the Church of Christ is composed of those who are converted and live a holy life.

These people, so vastly different from the Church and non-Church people, naturally were persecuted. They journeyed from one place to another seeking refuge. Alphonso, King of Aragon, forced them to leave his country. Often false accusations were made against them. They were tried before councils. Often they were severely criticized and threatened. Not only were they excommunicated from the Church, but in addition, they were accused of false doctrines of which they

were innocent. Many of them had to suffer under the Inquisitions. Some historians claim that Dominic persecuted them with a high hand, and that Simon de Montfort stamped out many in his crusade. Many were frozen to death, while others suffered in caves, and still others were cast from high precipices. Early in their persecution, a group fled to the Cottian Alps. As they fled to the mountains, they would often be detained by not being allowed to pass through certain sections of country. Their mountain homes were indeed simple and not adequate for the hard winters. When the heavy snows fell, many died for want of food and proper shelter. The East side of the Cottian mountains in Italy seems to be their most permanent place of development. Here, for a time, about ten thousand enjoyed civil and religious liberty. During the Reformation they were persecuted in the valley of Piedmont, Italy. Twenty-six hundred from different parts were allowed to withdraw to Geneva.

At the present time, the Waldensians are considered as some of the best people who have lived on the earth. Only two small groups are still extant. The one group is in Italy, and the other in South America.<sup>2</sup> North Carolina claims members of these sturdy fathers of the Faith. Protestant Churches of North America have in recent years been donating money to help preserve the small remnant that is left. At present, followers of this faith have a seminary at Florence, Italy, for the education of their youth. Some young people from other Churches, such as the Methodist, have been studying at this Waldensian institution. The Waldensians were true to their

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2. According to an account given by Fred S. Goodman. This account was published by the American Waldensian Aid Society, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York, in a pamphlet entitled "The Waldensians and Italy."



motto, "The light shines in darkness." God raised up this noble people in the deep gloom of the ages to shine as a light in the dark places of the earth. "Surely they were a white lily in the Alpine snows to bloom amongst thorns, thistles, and weeds."

MORAVIANS. Another group of people who have many points in their faith similar to the Brethren in Christ are the Moravians. The Moravian Brethren sprang up in Bohemia after the death of John Huss. Huss was tried and condemned at the council which met at Constance from 1414-1418. Dr. David S. Schaff, in his work on Huss, tells how the preachers before Huss stirred the city by their sermons. Konrad of Waldhausen, a forerunner of Huss, preached repentance and righteousness. "Konrad attacked spiritual pride, avarice, luxury, usury, and other sins. The effect of his sermons was shown in changed lives. Women, it is reported, laid aside their jewelry and their rich garments, influenced by these warnings" (41). Waldhausen had been called from Austria by the Emperor, Charles IV, to assist in reform of the clergy. As the reform took on a national and even a European significance John Huss became the leader. The New Bethlehem Chapel became his place of preaching. After his death some of his followers thought it right to take up arms against the Roman Church. There were others, however, who felt to trust God, and were willing to live a pious life, being content to worship in a simple manner, in quiet meetings for prayer and Scripture reading. They were known as "Brethren" and later became the Moravian Church. Their origin cannot be traced back directly to the Waldensians. These Brethren believed and taught rejection of oaths, of the military profession, of all official rank, titles and endowments, and of a hierarchy.

They did not aim to practice Communism, but the rich were to give to the poor and Christians were to live as nearly as possible like the Apostolic community at Jerusalem. These Brethren were early settlers in Pennsylvania. They located at a town named Lititz, and at Bethlehem. Their beliefs and practices had an influence on the views of other Religious bodies in the state. They had no direct influence on the early Brethren in Christ, but the name, "Brethren," as used by them, may have had some results in the term being used by other bodies, including the Brethren in Christ.

ANABAPTISTS. Some contend that the Brethren in Christ Church originated with the Anabaptists. The Anabaptists arose in Germany in the wake of the Reformation, and have been called by some the Radicals. Believing that the Church is composed of the regenerated only, made them oppose Infant Baptism. For this reason, those baptized in infancy had to be rebaptized after conversion. This is how they received their name, "Anabaptists." The mode of baptism which they adopted was immersion. This, they believed to be the mode taught in the Word. There were two types of Anabaptists, namely, the Fanaticals, and the Enthusiasts. Thomas Münzer was the leader of the Fanaticals. This group arose in 1521. Münzer was ready to abolish the authority of both Church and State, and substitute a Kingdom of Saints, with himself as head. Some think he was responsible for the Peasants revolting and causing the Peasant War. The Enthusiasts were founded at Zurich by Grebel and other Anabaptists. The Enthusiasts had their misgivings concerning participation in the Government. They would not serve as magistrates nor help to inflict capital punishment. Their spirit was sincere and devout, and they were peace abiding

citizens. On account of their beliefs concerning baptism and their attitude toward the Church in relation to the State, they were persecuted severely. They were called heretics and spoken of as licentious and fanatical. They were accused of causing offences against decency and morality, and as being disturbers of public order. These adversities, however, did not hinder them from diffusing their doctrine over Germany, Switzerland, Holland, and other countries. Their teachings spread like a burning fever and many became followers.

A body often classed as Anabaptists, but different in spirit, was organized by Menno Simons. It is known as the Mennonites. Some of the Mennonite tenets are: to live strictly according to the Bible; to have no formal creeds; to discard oaths, the use of weapons, and every sort of revenge; to approve civil government, but refuse to hold office; to oppose the national Church; and to have a strict Church discipline. This organization will be considered more fully in the next chapter, "The Starting of the Church in America."

**BAPTISTS.** The Baptists originated from the Anabaptists. Some Historians class them as Anabaptists. The Waldensians had some influence on the beliefs of the Baptists. The Baptists came into existence in the sixteenth century. These people received severe persecution even from other reformers. Their beliefs separated them from the other sects. They believed in, and demanded genuine repentance and regeneration of every individual through the Holy Spirit, and that of his own free will and choice. They demanded separation from the world and worldly things, a uniting with the Church, and taking a vow of abstinence from all worldly and sinful pleasures; and further demanded a peaceable and non-resistant life. It was their plan to bring into fellowship

all Truth-loving, believing, obedient, regenerate children of God, out of the great unregenerate mass of sinful humanity. They rejected Infant Baptism and practiced Immersion. This brought scorn and contempt from their opposers, and many suffered martyrdom. In the seventeenth century the laws became so rigid and severe that some of these people emigrated to other countries. A group went to Holland and some came to America under the leadership of Roger Williams.

PIETISTS. This is another European group of people which is of interest to the Brethren in Christ Church. This was an influential, instructive, and interesting movement in the Lutheran Church for the purpose of reviving declining piety. The Church had become a creed-bound theological and sacramentarian organization. Christian faith seemed to move from the heart to the head. The people were realizing the conditions and a few men, as Jacob Bachman, and others, attempted a reform. However, the founder of the Pietistic movement was Philipp Jakob Spener, who was born in 1635, and was raised by a pious god-mother. After receiving his education, he went to Geneva and there was greatly influenced in his views by a Waldensian. He consecrated his life to the preaching of the Word. He saw conditions in the Church which were dangerous, and he began to hold meetings in his own home. He made six proposals which he thought would improve conditions. These made an impression over all Germany, and some pastors adopted them. He and his followers aroused much offense, so they left Leipzig and went to the University of Hall, which became the chief home of the Pietists. This movement revived Biblical study in Europe. Spener believed that Christianity consisted in change of heart, in holiness of life, and in making the Bible superior to creeds.



He believed in the New Birth, and in separation from the world. He shunned worldly amusements such as dancing, the theater, and public games, and effected severe austerity with regard to dress, meals, and consecration. These Pietists had to endure some persecutions and many were driven from their homes. They went to Switzerland, and other European countries, and to America. As a distinct movement, it ran its course before the middle of the eighteenth century. However, other movements were affected, and its influence for good was not lost, though some did become fanatical.

PERSECUTION. It is generally thought that the persecution in the "old country" which these new movements received came from the Catholic Church, but the fact is that it came from the State Protestant Church. There were many problems confronting the leaders of the Reform movements. As is generally the case in a period of transition, there were some who kept steady and others who went to extremes. The larger Protestant Churches of the day, therefore, classed the Pietist and the Baptist groups as extremists. But these sturdy fathers did not represent the fanatical groups of the time—they were rather the sincere worshippers of God. These fathers realized the coldness in the Protestant Churches while in their hearts they felt a warmth and glow which kept them in the hour of persecution.

A traditional story was given by the late Henry Damude of Pelham, Ontario, in relation to the grandmother of an early member of the church. He stated that he received from his forefathers the information that the grandmother of Hans (John) Winger was persecuted for not going at least once a year to the State Church. It was a law that every one should

attend the State Church at least once a year, and thus acknowledge faith in the doctrines and show a willingness to recognize its authority. Many of her relatives went to the Church once a year, stating that it did not hurt them to go, even if they believed otherwise. They thought they could believe as they wanted to, and in going would avoid persecution, but the old mother felt that to do so was not standing for her convictions. When the soldiers came, as the custom was, to search for her, she could not be found. Her friends had concealed her in a cellar between a double wall. This double wall was made with a stone partition, being built a short distance from the outside wall. The soldiers when searching the house, noticed this wall, but felt confident that it was not a hiding place, and so left the house without finding her.

Hans Winger, a weaver of Switzerland, was one of a group who suffered persecution at the hands of the authorities. Many were sent out of the country and in this way some reached Pennsylvania. The principal step taken to deport to America was in 1710, when fifty-seven were put in one boat and sent down the Rhine. These people were called obstinate, in that they would not conform to the State Church. It was decided that nothing would do but to send them to a far-off land.

As early as 1640 a list was made of all unbaptized children, and of marriages which had not been performed by the State Church. The children of such parentage were considered illegitimate. Those guilty according to the laws of the State were to be put in prison and their children in orphanages. When these people were asked why they departed from the State Church, they said that the Church lacked Spiritual life and devotion. They felt that Infant Baptism had no power.

In relation to government, they claimed that it was ordained of God, yet they did not feel it right to take part in it. They felt that they were bound to pay taxes, but when it came to violence, they could not participate. In relation to oaths, they believed an end could not be made of things by an oath, and they believed that nothing is justified but yea, yea, and nay, nay.

These faithful fathers were known as bearded-oarsmen. When in prison, they were allowed to keep their beards. A cruel master said of them, "Those bearded-oarsmen we need not keep constantly in sight. They are conscientious and prefer to suffer on distant seas rather than to deny their faith of which their unshaven beards in the midst of criminals bear testimony. They are not criminals but good men."

In 1674 William Penn invited these people to come to Pennsylvania. Some came from Germany as early as 1684. Hans Winger came to America in 1737. It is altogether possible that this is the Hans Winger who carried the Faith of the Brethren in Christ Church to Canada. Hans Winger was the first Overseer of the Canadian Church. The first Overseer<sup>3</sup> of the Church in the United States was Jacob (Engel) Engle. He reached the United States from the old country in 1754.

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3. For many years the minister in charge was called Overseer instead of Elder or Bishop.



## CHAPTER II

### THE FOUNDING OF THE CHURCH IN AMERICA

There are various opinions in relation to the starting of the Brethren in Christ Church. The Church's customs and doctrinal views on some points are similar to the groups of believers discussed in Chapter One. It is evident that the beliefs of the Waldensians influenced either directly or indirectly the Moravians, Anabaptists, Mennonites, and Pietists. While the Waldensians did not as a sect spread throughout North America, some of their opinions reached Pennsylvania through these other groups. What is true of the Waldensian influence reaching Pennsylvania might also be said of the Pietists. The Pietistic movement was not a Church, but rather a powerful religious awakening in the Church of Europe during the later decades of the seventeenth century. It was a movement against the formal and non-spiritual theology of the Church. The Waldensian movement was more or less against the formal and non-spiritual theology of the Catholic Church, while the Pietistic movement was an awakening in the Lutheran Church. The Anabaptist movement which reached America stressed opposition to infant baptism as lacking Scriptural authority. These Anabaptists were strong on the point of believing in Christ and being baptized. They claimed that only such persons as had been baptized after a confession of faith in Christ constituted a real Church.

Churches growing out of these movements came to North America and a number of other Churches with this same back-



ground started in this country. These American Churches with similar views to the Brethren in Christ are the Church of the Brethren, Mennonites, United Brethren in Christ, and Moravians. The Church of the Brethren and Mennonites, perhaps, had the most influence on the views of the Brethren in Christ.

There is one other Faith that should be mentioned, which had some influence, perhaps indirectly, on the Brethren in Christ Church. It is the Friends, formerly known as Quakers, who, coming from England, had many views in common with the awakening groups on the continent.

*"The Quaker of the olden time!  
How calm and firm and true!"*

These were the people who gave much of the Puritan element to religious thinking in Pennsylvania. People who are scrupulously strict in their religious life are called Puritanic. In this sense, the faiths mentioned above, including the Brethren in Christ, might well be called Puritanic. In the cradle of the faiths mentioned the Brethren in Christ Church was born. The Church was directly influenced by local congregations in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and indirectly by the European background which was being perpetuated by these local groups.

At this point the reader is encouraged to turn to the Appendix in this volume and read the various opinions of writers concerning the starting of the Brethren in Christ Church. This examination of the views of a number of historians will not only enlighten the reader, but make the rest of this history more interesting. The conflicting opinions cause one to think for himself. This liberty of doing one's

own thinking is the privilege of every reader. In fact, your author encourages you to make even further inquiry into the history of the Brethren in Christ, so that we shall gradually prove more of the facts of the history of this Church. If these important articles in the Appendix<sup>1</sup> were not presented to my readers, many would feel the final word had been written about the origin and development of the Church to the present. The interesting history of the Brethren in Christ Church has just begun with this volume.

Taking for granted that enough stress has been laid on the purpose of the Appendix, and that the readers interested have carefully read the articles contained therein, we shall now proceed with a discussion of the material as given, and concerning the starting of the Church in America. There is no disagreement by any of these very brief writers, with the exception of one, as to the country in which the Church started. Your author is thoroughly convinced that the Church started in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in the United States of America. Historical sites and traditional accounts likewise confirm this fact. Dr. Boswell evidently lacked the needed data to prove the location of the starting of the Church, and thus came to a wrong conclusion. The Church, as previously explained, had a background in Europe, but its first organization was along the Susquehanna river, in the state of Pennsylvania.

The question has often been asked whether the Brethren in Christ Church is a division from another Church, or whether it is a new organization. Abraham H. Cassel, who wrote one of the articles in the Appendix, was a member of the Church

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1. This history is complete without the exhibits in the appendix.

of the Brethren. Historians of the Church of the Brethren, and many members of that Church, claim that the Brethren in Christ Church is a branch of the Church of the Brethren. The article from the Census Bureau and the one written by Jacob N. Engle, are the views of members of the Brethren in Christ Church. These last mentioned writers seem to feel that the Church had a Mennonite background. The Mennonite people themselves are not strong on the point that the Brethren in Christ are a split from them. The people who favor the idea that the Brethren in Christ Church has a Mennonite background are mostly Engles, or those related to the Engle relationship, or clan. This clan claims a Mennonite background in the persons of one of the first ministers in the Church and his mother. The evidence on both sides has been weighed and reweighed. Some will disagree on the point for years to come. Some who have expressed themselves on the point at hand have allowed personal bias and preference for certain sects to enter into their decision. One father of the Church said, "I like the spirit of the ..... best, and would rather have it said the Brethren in Christ came from them, rather than the ..... Church." Instead of naming sects which were mentioned, a blank space is purposely left. The attitude of this father is not the spirit of the true historian, and such a bias hinders one in finding the facts. Authentic history is a history of facts, and that which is traditional must be set aside, when facts have been established.

From the information at hand, it appears that the Brethren in Christ Church was born in the cradle of various sects, each having a number of beliefs in common, and all active in Pennsylvania when the Brethren in Christ started. As previously explained, these groups came from Europe, and had

many points in common before leaving the mother country. The Brethren in Christ, as far as we have been able to find out, is not a split from another Church body, but rather an organization of a group of believers who had never joined another Church. At least, the majority of the first organization were of this type. This first organization might have been influenced more by one group than another, but on the whole, various groups played a part in the thinking and decisions of this first organization of the Church. The faiths, or sects, which influenced the thinking of the first members of the Church were the Church of the Brethren, the Mennonites, and the Quakers, now known as the Society of Friends. Your author believes that the influence was in the order of the names mentioned. That is, the greatest influence came from the first sect named, a lesser influence came from the second sect named, and still less from the third sect named.

There are two other Faiths which had an influence on the thinking of the first members of the Brethren in Christ, the United Brethren, and the Moravian Brethren. The United Brethren Church did not organize as a religious body for nearly twenty-five years later than the date of the starting of the Brethren in Christ. But during the early years of the Brethren in Christ, groups were active in Lancaster County, which finally became a part of the United Brethren in Christ Church. Both the United Brethren in Christ and the Brethren in Christ had similar backgrounds in Lancaster County. The United Brethren background differed with the Brethren in Christ in that they were more influenced by such sects as the Reformed Church and the Methodist Church. The United Brethren Church bears a general resemblance to the Methodist. But the United Brethren were also influenced in their

thinking by the Mennonites and other Churches which had a bearing on the views of the Brethren in Christ. These similarities of origin and background make it advisable to consider the United Brethren Church as an influence in relation to the Brethren in Christ.

The Moravian Brethren, indirectly, had an influence on the Brethren in Christ. In methods of evangelism, the Methodists were influenced by the Moravians, the United Brethren by the Methodists, and to a small degree the Brethren in Christ by the United Brethren. The name, Brethren, as used by the Brethren in Christ, the Church of the Brethren, the United Brethren, and other religious bodies, dates back through the years to the Moravians. Early methods of evangelism used by the Brethren in Christ were copied chiefly from the Church of the Brethren and Mennonites. Present methods of evangelism used in the Brethren in Christ Church are largely of Methodist origin. The present methods came from the mid-western states, and indirectly from a Methodist background. This relation of the Moravians to the Methodist Church, and the relation of the Moravians and Methodists to the United Brethren Church, and the relation of the Brethren in Christ to the United Brethren and Methodists, makes the Brethren in Christ slightly interested in the Moravian Church. A brief study of the Church of the Brethren, the Mennonites, the Quakers, the United Brethren, and the Moravians will be helpful in understanding the starting of the Brethren in Christ Church.

**THE CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN.** This Church, known as Tunkers, or Dunkers, or German Baptist Brethren, started in Germany under the leadership of Alexander Mack.



About 1706 Mack was moved by the spirit of the Pietists and started to examine the Word of God for himself. He, with a small group of followers, decided to be guided by the Bible alone. In 1708, at Schwarzenau, eight went to the river Eder and baptized **one another**. One chosen by lot baptized Mack, and he baptized the other seven. They believed that baptism was for believing adults and not for infants. While they had no association with the Mennonites and Quakers, they followed in many respects the same lines in working, doctrine, polity, and practice. Members of this new organization came to Pennsylvania in 1719. One of their first Churches in America can still be seen in Germantown, Pennsylvania. Peter Becker became their leader in this country. What became of those who did not come to America is not known, but they died out completely in Germany (28).

After a few years in this new country, one, Conrad Beisel, broke with the group and organized a work at Ephrata in Lancaster County, Penna. Beisel and his followers differed from the rest on the point of keeping the seventh day of the week for worship and rest. About 1728 this new group purchased two hundred fifty acres of land and constructed a number of large buildings at Ephrata for living quarters. These buildings were well built of wood, clay, and straw. At one time over three hundred men and women lived at Ephrata. The men lived in one cloister building, and the women in another. They ate mostly vegetables, and other plain foods, avoiding meat. They slept on boards with a block of wood for a pillow. The narrow doors in the cloister reminded them of the straight and narrow way to heaven. These people have the credit of starting the first Sunday School in America.

In that marriage was not allowed, the group became

smaller and smaller. Finally, some of the group married, so that a remnant is left to this day, 1940. A few of the group moved to Franklin County, near Waynesboro, Penna., and a few others went farther west, not far from Altoona, Penna. The Waynesboro group built a long brick dwelling and Church. These Seventh Day German Baptists, though few in number, are still large enough as a body not to agree. The few families left differ on the point of ownership of Church property. The courts were used to try to settle the difficulty. The State of Pennsylvania is desirous of retaining the property at Ephrata as an historical monument. The Brothers' building has been torn down, but the Saal Sisters' house and the Chapel are still standing. These buildings were built in 1738. God's Acre, the graveyard near by, in which these Seventh Day German Baptists buried their dead, has many historical graves (28).

MENNONITES. These people date back to a time between 1500 and 1550, when Menno Simons broke with the Catholic Church. He received light through reading the Bible for himself. Soon a small group of like faith joined him and thus was started the first Mennonite congregation.<sup>2</sup> Some think that these early Mennonites were from those Waldensians who survived the persecution and the Peasant War. A number of the views of the Waldensians are found among the Mennonites, such as the refusal to shed blood, to take oaths, and the rejection of infant baptism. Others consider the relation to the Waldensians as merely similarity in doctrine, rather than direct origin (9).

The development of the Church in America seems to have

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2. Some of this Faith in Switzerland date back to 1525 and were at first called "Brethren."

started with Rittinghuysen, who came to Germantown in 1688. By 1727 there were believers of this faith at Shippack, Cone-stoga, Great Swamp, and Manatany. The names of their early ministers are of German and Swiss origin. Their leaders are chosen by casting lots. Remuneration is not usually given for services in relation to the Church. The Mennonites are frugal, thrifty, and hospitable. Congregational singing is the only form of music accepted by the whole body of believers of this Church. The Church continued to grow until thousands accepted the faith. Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, is one of the strongholds of this people. Some of their church buildings seat a thousand people. There are seventeen main divisions of Mennonites at present, and the main body consists of about forty thousand members.

The Mennonites, including the Amish Mennonites, are a most reliable people. Dr. Gracey, of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, in speaking of the Amish Mennonites said, "Those Mennonites always pay their bills, and if a member of their Church cannot pay, the Church pays for him." It has been said of the Mennonites in general that their form of worship is free from every semblance of ostentation. They do not turn strangers from their doors. They do not give alms to be seen of men, and they help their enemies when in distress.

It is claimed that the Mennonite Brethren in Christ has a relationship with the Brethren in Christ Church. Ohmer U. Herr gives this information which was remembered by O. B. Ulery's mother. The Wengerites were a group of worshipers who left the Brethren in Christ about 1840. Later this Wengerite group divided and a number of them under the leadership of Reverend Andy Good, joined with a congregation of Mennonites. This took place in the vicinity of Liberty,

Ohio. A group known as Swankites who had left another religious body joined the fellowship of Wengerites and Mennonites. These three groups which joined chose the name Mennonite Brethren in Christ. Some claim the Swankites were also originally Brethren in Christ. The name Swank is not a family name found among the Brethren in Christ, so the above account appears nearer to the facts.

**QUAKERS.** As a society, the Quakers hold considerable interest for any reader. It was through these people, and especially William Penn, that Pennsylvania became the land of freedom for many faiths. The suffering in this new land was considerable for the early settlers, but the privilege to serve God as conscience dictated made it seem like a land of freedom, instead of suffering. To these dwellers in a new land it seemed as though God had raised up George Fox, the founder of the Quaker faith. Fox was born in 1624. The people of England were dissatisfied at this time with both the Church and State. Fox brought to them the belief that a Divine power within man is necessary to live a Christian life. By this power within, man can commune with God, and know God's will in everything. His first followers were called Children of Truth, later they were called Religious Society of Friends. These people were commonly called Quakers. They were destined to suffer much at the hands of enemies.

The spirit of Fox and his followers helped to make William Penn a man who feared to do anything that would displease God. Penn was a man with a devout Christian spirit. When Penn was given Pennsylvania, he wrote thus to a friend: "My love in the Lord salutes thee and dear friends that love the Lord's precious truth in those parts. Thine I have, and for my business here know that after many waitings, watchings,



solicitations, and disputes in council, this day my country was confirmed to me under the great seal of England." He opposed calling the country confirmed to him "Pennsylvania," for fear it would be looked upon as vanity on his part. He suggested calling it "Sylvania," without his name attached. He further wrote to his friend thus: "It is a clear and just thing, and my God, that has given it me through many difficulties will, I believe, bless and make it the seed of a nation." He was determined, in matters of religion, to leave all free to hold such opinions as they desired. He enacted for his state that it should be for those who "hold themselves obliged in conscience, to live peaceably and justly in civil society." He provided that such would not be molested for their beliefs and practices.

It is easy to understand why Penn and his followers came to America and why he endeavored to make it possible for every one to worship God according to his conscience. It was the result of his own suffering for his religious views. He knew what it was to be fined and expelled for non-conformity to established forms of worship. For his faith he was turned out of his own home. For the same reason he was sent to prison. Many of his followers likewise suffered in prison for their religious convictions. Hundreds of Quakers were put into prison for holding to their religious convictions. Pennsylvania is the land to which these people came for a place of rest from persecution, and as a place to worship God according to their faith.

The State records of Pennsylvania give many accounts of these people. It is recorded that they were conscientious and would not use the name of God in affirmation. They would not bear arms in time of war, but instead, they helped in other



ways. Through the influence of the Quakers and other religious bodies in the state, laws were passed against games and sports, including boating, tennis, and card playing. Swearing, lying, profane talk, and the practice of cock-fighting and dueling were severely punished. People working on Sunday had to pay a penalty in money. Religion to these early settlers was far more than a mere profession. The many practical aspects were carried out in all walks of life.

**THE UNITED BRETHREN CHURCH.** This Church started under the leadership of Philip William Otterbein and Martin Boehm. Otterbein came to Pennsylvania from Germany with the purpose of aiding in religious activity. After reaching Pennsylvania, he passed through a deepening of his religious experience. He preached a thorough repentance for sin, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as a personal and conscious Savior. He proclaimed the necessity for a deeper inward spiritual experience, and insisted that it was the duty of each person to obtain such an experience. This, of course, was not appreciated by some with whom he was laboring. Martin Boehm was a Mennonite and had received a similar experience while working among his people. Otterbein went to a service held in a barn owned by a man named Isaac Long, of the Mennonite faith. This barn is not far from Ephrata, in the direction of Lancaster city. In this barn, Otterbein heard Boehm preach. Otterbein agreed with the preaching of Boehm, feeling their experiences were the same. At the close of the service, Otterbein put his arms around Boehm and said, "Wir sind Brüder" (We are Brethren). These two men for a number of years, following this eventful meeting, held evangelistic services together. These men were not thinking of starting another Church, but the results of their labors ended

in starting one. The growing number of converts enjoyed one another's fellowship. From time to time many would come together for periods of worship. In 1789 a joint meeting of the many converts was held. This fellowship continued and in 1800, at a gathering in Maryland, an ecclesiastical body was formed (8).

For such who might be interested in visiting the historical barn this detailed information is given. In leaving Lancaster city in the direction of Ephrata, take route 222 to Landis Valley. This very small village is the home of a museum of Pennsylvania Dutch articles, collected by the Landis brothers. Turn left to the first improved road to the right. This is only a short distance.

About sixty years later a number in Pennsylvania broke with the original body. These people, now known as the United Christian Church, continued the practice of feet washing, and the wearing of a prayer veiling for the sisters. In 1889 another division resulted in a disagreement on the constitution. The larger group of the two was called the United Brethren in Christ, and the smaller group the United Brethren in Christ (Old Constitution). The chief contention was on the point of secret orders. The Old Constitution group was not willing at that time to admit into fellowship any person belonging to a secret order.

**THE MORAVIAN BRETHREN.** These brethren date back to the time of John Huss. They are noted for their extensive mission work in different parts of the world. The first missionaries of this organization came to Pennsylvania in 1734. These missionaries worked among both the Indians and the white settlers. Lititz, Pennsylvania, not far from Lan-

caster, was one of the four Moravian villages in America organized exclusively for this group. The term, Brethren, applied to a religious organization, seems to have originated with the Moravians soon after the period of Huss. There arose the Brethren, the Moravian Brethren, and the Bohemian Brethren, as they were called at various periods. They were also called the *Unitas Fratrum* (Unity of Brethren). These Christians had found an experience and a joy which bound them together as one. It could be said of them, they had but one Master even Christ, and all were brethren.

The term, Brethren, as used by the Moravians, and some of the doctrines and practices of the United Brethren Church, the Quakers, the Mennonites, and the Church of the Brethren, had a bearing on the practices and doctrines of the Brethren in Christ Church. The name, River Brethren, as the Brethren in Christ were first called, and the present name, both have the term, Brethren. We are of the opinion that the use of the term, Brethren, as part of a name for a body of believers in Christ came as a result of the name being used by other faiths such as the Church of the Brethren and Moravian Brethren.

It has been claimed, but not proved, that the Moravian Church spends more for missions per member than any other Christian body of believers, and that the Brethren in Christ stands second in mission activity.

CONCLUSIONS. The United Brethren and Brethren in Christ started about the same time in Lancaster County. Revival efforts in progress during the latter part of the eighteenth century resulted in these two organizations. The heart struggles of these two bodies were the same in relation to

other Churches as to what steps to pursue. There were, however, a number of differences on other lines. The first leaders of the United Brethren left other Churches, while the first leaders of the Brethren in Christ were new converts who had to decide whether to join one of the organized Churches, or whether they should start a communion of their own.

A number of similarities can be found between the Quakers and the Brethren in Christ. Both groups wore a religious garb, observed the holy kiss, opposed fashionable garments, discouraged suing for payment of debts, gave money to the deacons with which to help the poor, refused to take oaths, refused to bear arms, and stood for peace. These Churches differed radically on Church polity and doctrine. The Quakers omitted the ordinances and during worship they waited for the Spirit to move some one to speak. The Brethren in Christ practice many ordinances and decide some one should speak before it was time for preaching.

The Mennonites and Brethren in Christ agree on the points of refusing to shed blood, refusing to take oaths, the rejection of infant baptism, the wearing of a religious garb, and the washing of feet as an ordinance of the church. The main differences between these two Churches are the mode of baptism and choosing of Church leaders. Menno Simons came from the Catholic Church, and seemingly was influenced some in his views on baptism by the Mother Church. This seems to be the reason why the Mennonites pour, instead of immersing as do the Church of the Brethren, and the Brethren in Christ. The Mennonites choose their Church leaders by the use of the lot instead of voting, as the Brethren in Christ do.

The Church of the Brethren and the Brethren in Christ have many points of similarity. The background of these



two Churches was about the same in the Old Country. The Church of the Brethren organized in Germany and the Brethren in Christ in Pennsylvania. In both cases there was no leaving one Church and joining another. Neither of these Churches can be called a split from another Church. These Churches agree on the mode of baptism, the ordinance of feet washing, the observing of the love feast in the evening, taking the communion immediately following the love feast, the veiling of the sisters, the anointing with oil in case of sickness, stressing the eighteenth chapter of Matthew when differences arise between members, plain attire with the absence of jewelry, as little use of the civil law as possible, affirmation instead of the taking of oaths, the teaching of nonresistance, and total abstinence in relation to liquor. Through the years the Brethren in Christ have changed less on some of these early points of agreement than the Church of the Brethren. These two Church bodies differ on the purpose of baptism, the purpose of the love feast, and in methods of evangelism.

To trace the starting of the Brethren in Christ Church in America, it is necessary to go back to the early settlers of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. The task of settling and meeting the hardship of a new land had taken the attention of the people for a time. Now that they were quite well established in their new homes, the thought of their spiritual welfare concerned them anew. The teaching which seemed to hold the most prominence was that of the New Birth. Preachers and laymen alike stressed the teaching that "Ye must be born again." It was taught that a person, to be born again, must undergo a change in his feelings and principles of moral action which will be either accompanied or succeeded by exercises of which he is conscious, and can give an account; so



that those who have been changed may be distinguished from those who have not experienced the New Birth. This wave of concern reached most of the people in the County at that time. The result was the Churches were strengthened and built up, and became more loyal to the doctrines they supported. Many were born again and rejoiced in the new-found joy which had come to them. Some who had been saved were not directly under the influence of any Church organization. This new assurance of being born again, closely joined such together, for it created among them a bond of fellowship. Thus, groups arose who would meet from time to time for worship and fellowship. Such groups would meet from house to house, spending much time in prayer for the conversion of others and for the continued influence of God's Spirit to rest upon them. One of these groups resulted in an organization formerly known as River Brethren and now known as the Brethren in Christ Church.

This River Brethren group were called Brethren, due to the fellowship they enjoyed. The word, river, attached to them, was simply a designation concerning their location. This group which resulted in the Brethren in Christ Church, lived not far from the Susquehanna river in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. When reference was made to this group of Brethren near the river, they were called River Brethren, to distinguish them from other similar groups of Christians in the County.

The organization of the Brethren in Christ Church does not date back to any one man as is the case with a number of Church bodies. In this case a small group launched out on their own initiative with the purpose of serving God as they understood. This group was conscious of the beliefs and

practices of other Churches, but from their first inception they prayerfully and regularly read the Bible as individuals and as a group, to learn of its teachings direct. When they found that their interpretation of the Bible did not fully agree with any then existing organizations, it was decided to form an organization of their own.

How to proceed in organizing was copied from the method used by the Church of the Brethren when the Church of the Brethren, or Dunkards, as they were called, organized in Germany. One of the group of Brethren baptized another, and the first one baptized, in turn baptized the rest of the group. To this day, no one knows who did the first baptizing. It is claimed there were twelve brethren in the first organization. Their spirit of humility made no one desirous of being over the rest. For many years the Brethren in Christ Church worked on the principle of parity in relation to all the members. The idea was that they were Brethren, yes, Brethren in Christ. Christ was considered as their Head. No effort should be made by the Church, or by any clan, to single out one of the twelve as being the first member, or as the founder of the Church.

It is believed that the first Brethren who functioned in leading the meetings, when the group met for worship, were Jacob Engle, Hans Engle, and Hans Winger. Jacob Engle appears to have taken the most prominent part as a leader. This is why he has been called the first Overseer of the Church.

It is the opinion of some that the exact location of the first organization can be visited on the farm owned in 1939 by Abraham H. Engle, Lancaster County. This place was known in past years as the big orchard Engle farm at the river. This

farm is one mile west of Rowenna. When the Church first organized, this farm was owned by Jacob Engle, one of the first members. It was owned later by Henry S. Engle, and then by Abraham B. Engle. It is without question that the first organization took place in the vicinity of this farm. Whether this farm mentioned is the exact place of the first organization has not been fully proved. It was however, one of a number of homes where the first group of twelve gathered for worship. The present house is still arranged for worship as the homes in those days were. Homes in those days, up to the time when churches were built by the Church, usually had several quite large rooms with a number of doors which could be opened to form one large space for services. A small cupboard above the doors, in which the song books were stored from one service to another, can still be seen.

There are a number of points of historic interest in Lancaster County. One is an old cemetery located about three miles from Marietta and about one mile from Rowenna, along the Marietta and Bainbridge pike. It is just a short distance from this point to the big orchard Engle farm mentioned above. The cemetery is enclosed by a stone wall about four feet high. The size of the enclosed plot is thirty-three feet by twenty-seven feet. In 1933 there were nine tombstones in this plot. On the south side of the wall is a slab with this inscription: "Within this enclosure lie the remains of Ulrich Engle and wife who emigrated from Switzerland to this country with their family of eight children in the year 1753 and settled on this homestead. Ulrich died about the year 1755 and his wife about the year 1759. Some of their descendants are also buried herein. This burial ground has been set apart as a resting place for them and as a memorial of respect and honor by their descendants A.D. 1878."

The land surrounding this small cemetery has been owned in recent years by a railroad company. It is a much neglected piece of land. The name, Wildcat, as it is called, seems quite fitting. A short distance south of the graveyard, could be seen, for many years, the remains of an old cave, used by these early settlers. This cave was used for the storage and preservation of food. The date of the building of this cave is not available. The reason for the close proximity of the cave and small cemetery is due to the custom in earlier years of having family burying plots on the farm. Pennsylvania has many of these small burial plots scattered over the state. In 1933 a walnut tree and a black cherry tree stood in this small grave plot. These trees with the violets which bloom each spring seem to stand as marks which perpetuate the memory of those resting beneath the sod.<sup>3</sup>

John K. Miller, of Maytown, informed your author, that the maiden name of the wife of Ulrich Engle was Anna Brechbill, who came from Switzerland. The children born to Ulrich and Anna were Ulrich Jr., Hans, Anna, Barbara, Catharine, Christine, Maria, and Jacob or Yokeli. It is this Jacob who became one of the first ministers of the Church. He lived to be seventy-nine years, three months and five days old. He is buried at Reichs cemetery not far from Maytown, Pennsylvania. To locate the grave, turn left when entering the cemetery. The grave is marked by a small red sand stone. The stone is about four inches thick, and about eighteen inches high. Instead of a square top, the center is curved and slopes with decorated lines to the side.

The inscription on the stone is as follows: "Hier ruht ein

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3. The land surrounding this grave yard was taken over by the Government in 1942.



alter Gries, der orbeite im werk Gottes wahr mit flies, nun is er in sein Fatherland. Jacob Engel wahr er genant sein nahm yetz viel besser ist. Er lebt und sterbt ein wahrer Christ. Er hat sein alter bracht für wahr Trei Monath nine und sieben stsich yahr fünf Tag yetzt in ewiger ruh.”<sup>4</sup>

Translated it reads: “Here rests an aged pilgrim, who labored in the work of God, truly with diligence. Now is he in his Fatherland, Jacob Engle was his name. His name now much better is. He lived and died a true Christian. He brought his age truly to three months, seventy-nine years and five days, in which time he lived. Now in eternal rest.”

Jacob Engle was born in 1753. He was converted at the age of eighteen. He was baptized seven years after his conversion. If this is correct, and if the Church had its beginning at the time of Engle’s baptism, then the Brethren in Christ Church had its beginning in 1778. Your author is of the opinion that the Church started soon after the noted date of 1776 and some time before the Brethren in Christ visited Canada in 1789. This last mentioned date has authoritative background in a statement received from the Markham District, Canada. This history concerning Jacob Engle in J. K. Miller’s account as found in the Appendix, confirms the dates of Engle’s birth, conversion, and baptism. This account states that the founding of the Church took place in 1785. This date Miller gives as traditional as well as the date of Engle’s baptism in 1778. Miller’s account states that Jacob Engle united with the Mennonites in 1767, according to a traditional account. The records show he was converted in 1771, married in 1773, and baptized, 1778. This Mennonite connection,

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4. This is Pennsylvania Dutch.



some are prone to doubt. Since he was not converted until 1771, it is very evident that this is the important date, and that the time of his baptism is another important date. The Brethren in Christ have always placed considerable stress on conversion, known as the crisis method, and baptism as a sign of conversion.

A very small village, known for many years as Stackstown, holds much interest as well as Wildcat and vicinity. It is only a short distance from Wildcat to Stackstown. In fact it is one and the same vicinity. The name, Stackstown, resulted from the farmers building many stacks on their farms. In the vicinity of Wildcat and Stackstown, the Church started. All evidence points to this section. Some claim the first baptism was in the stream at Stackstown, and not in the Susquehanna river as others think. Some also are of the opinion that the first organization took place at Stackstown and that the first love feast was held here. When all agree on a location, and are not more than a few miles apart in opinion, it seems unnecessary to continue research on a point of no greater value and on which further proof does not seem available.

These first members of the Church were some of the best people on the earth. What an example it would be to this generation to watch them in their daily toil and in their service for the Master. The tallow candle lighted the pages of the German Bible, Luther's translation, as they read. They were faithful in attending services, and did not neglect as the manner of some is in later generations. The two things which took their time and attention were worship and providing for temporal needs. The homes of these members were homes of prayer. The members of the Church were known for their

love one for the other. In business their word was as good as their signature. Their homes and attire were both simple but of good material. Their gray garbs made no appeal to vanity. Cape overcoats, long tail coats, broad rimmed hats, and high top boots characterized the dress of the men. Long cape bonnets, cape dresses heavily gathered, aprons, heavy white caps, shawls, and plain shoes composed the dress of the women. Modesty, the highest virtue of womanhood, was their practice. Grace at the table, family worship, and the singing of hymns, gave a distinct Christian atmosphere to the home life. This type of people was indeed the salt of the earth. All of their activities, including courting, marriage, and burial, were done in the fear of God. They taught that each person must know for himself that his sins are forgiven. Much of the time in religious meetings was spent by the members telling of God's dealing with them individually, and how they found peace with God.

This was a group of sincere religious people, destined to grow, but the growth was certain to be slow. The customs and the knowledge of a crisis experience had a tendency to limit the growth of the Church to relatively few new members each year. Other elements which did not encourage rapid growth were, the Church's interpretation of the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, and a leadership which thought more in terms of keeping the Church free from tares, than in terms of the growth of the Church. It has only been in recent years that the Church has been thinking in terms of extensive mission work both at home and in other countries. These slight hindrances to growth have, however, been some of the very things which helped preserve the faith and practices of the first members down to the present. Some of the members at present

are of the opinion that a smaller Church with a firm faith in the Bible and the teachings of Christ endeavored to be practiced, has accomplished as much as a much larger Church body with many of its earlier principles lost. With the starting of the Church in America in mind, we shall now turn to its gradual development.

## CHAPTER III

### THE CHURCH IN PENNSYLVANIA

Pennsylvania was created a commonwealth by an act of assembly dated November 27, 1779, and entitled "An act for vesting the lands of the proprietaries in this commonwealth." From this we see that the Brethren in Christ Church started about the same date as the state of Pennsylvania was created a commonwealth. This, however, is not the time that the Church was incorporated. For many years the Church worked as an organization without being incorporated as a body of believers which could legally carry on business.

The first application for incorporation was made March 22, 1904. This application was not accepted, but was laid over for investigation. Soon after the above mentioned date, a second application was made for incorporation. This was published and recorded and the petition for the charter was granted May 2, 1904, signed by George Kunkle, additional law judge, and recorded in the Recorder's office of Dauphin County in Charter Book G., volume 302.

From 1779 to 1904 the Church had a gradual growth. This period of development in the state of Pennsylvania is the chief concern of this chapter. The changes during these years in relation to doctrine and practices have been comparatively few. The Church has been more or less fearful of popularity of any kind. The chief interest through the years has been to follow as closely as possible the teachings of the Master.

Stackstown, now called Lobata, is still a place of interest to the Church, not only from the standpoint of being in the vicinity where the Church started, but on account of later history. When Hans Gish and Jacob M. Engle, a descendant of the first Overseer of the Church, were the outstanding leaders of the Brotherhood, Lobata was an active center of the Church. Many love feasts and other services were held here. For many years the Church did most of its baptizing in the stream at Lobata. This Jacob M. Engle was a brother to Jesse Engle, the Church's leader of the first group of missionaries to Africa. The fish ponds which Jacob M. Engle made can still be located, though not in use for many years. In these ponds Brother Engle raised fish for home use. The old mill and the house which was rebuilt in 1868 still stand. All that remains of the barn which burned down is the stone wall.

One other building still standing on this old homestead is of historical interest. It is a small house no longer in use, but still quite well preserved, known as the bride's house. Jesse Engle, referred to above, and S. G. Engle, of Philadelphia, and other couples started housekeeping in this building. The well-laid stone wall of this building bespeaks the care with which our fathers built. At one end is a basement with a door and one small window. The first story has three windows and one door with the upper half in panes. An old-fashioned roof with ends closed vertically covers the doorway. The front view of the upper story reveals three dormer windows in the roof. It is from this part of Lancaster County that Jesse Engle and wife moved when they located a few miles west of Grantham, Pennsylvania.

The small group which organized near Lobata, or Stackstown, in Lancaster County, began to grow and from this



county, members moved to different parts of the state. The first development was away from the river toward Mount Joy, Elizabethtown, Lancaster, and Manheim. These fertile rural sections appealed to these thrifty tillers of the soil. Whether they moved East, West, North, or South, to nearby counties or distant states, they generally settled on the best farming land. The largest organizations developed in the far famed valleys of Cumberland, Lebanon, and Lancaster counties.

The Church grew until it was deemed advisable to divide the work in Lancaster County under three Overseers. Each division later became known as a District. To distinguish one District from another, it was necessary to attach a name. The territory surrounding the starting place of the Church was called Donegal District. The section from Mount Joy to Manheim was called Rapho District. The section around Lancaster was called Manor-Pequea District. In these three cases the name of the township was used. The Donegal district included Lobata and much surrounding territory and part of York County. All development outside of Donegal District might be called the extension of the Church into new parts.

**DONEGAL DISTRICT.** Before the three above mentioned Districts were formed, all of the work was under one Overseer. The Church did not use the name bishop at first. For many years, in most cases, the oldest minister took charge. These ministers who cared for the oversight of the work were called Overseers. In that no salaries were paid to any of the leaders, it was the custom to place as many in office as were necessary to care for the work, and not overload one person. Those who did the most for the cause were the ones who were able financially, or who had the work most at heart. The Overseers of the mother District, Donegal, from

the starting of the Church to the time of the division into three districts in the order of service were Jacob Engle, Jacob Strickler, and John Gish.

Considerable has been mentioned in this account concerning Jacob Engle. Only a small amount of information is available concerning Jacob Engle. No information is available concerning Jacob Strickler. John Gish went by the name of Hansey Gisch, to distinguish him from his father, whose name was John. Hansey Gisch was an humble man in spirit, as well as humble in dress. He was born February 19, 1800, on the old Gish homestead three miles southwest of Elizabethtown. He was married to Susanna Musser. He spent considerable time visiting from house to house among the unsaved of the community. To help in the work of the Church, he made four trips to Canada, and at least five trips west to Ohio, Illinois, and Iowa. He encouraged zeal on the part of the members, in their work for the Master.

When John Gish was sixty-nine years old he visited Germany. After returning home, he said little in public about his visit. On one occasion he did tell in German, the language in which he always preached, about meeting a nobleman when he arrived in Germany. He asked the nobleman how one should conduct himself in Germany. The nobleman said, "just remain humble." Humility was the theme of his life. His humility, however, did not keep him from ruling the Church with rather a firm hand.

John Gish was Overseer when difficulty arose, which resulted in the division of the Church into the "River Brethren" and "Yorkers." He was also Overseer when the issue of building a Church house arose, and resulted in a split which started the Brinzer Church, later named "United Zion's Chil-

dren." His efforts to avoid these divisions were not successful. As a leader he stood for the principle of not doing anything rashly. His grave can be seen in the Conoy Cemetery, near Elizabethtown.

The first two deacons in this mother district were John Gish and John Engle. When the need arose for the strengthening of the deaconate, George Lenhert and Abram B. Engle were chosen. The next two deacons serving were Isaac Hershey and Michael Musser. The last mentioned deacon was a member of the Church when the division arose which resulted in the United Zion's Children. He was allowed to sit in the council when the question which caused the division was discussed. Being young in the service, he had no voice in the matter, not even the privilege to vote. In the early years of the Church, only those matured in years were allowed to help in deciding Church issues.

These early deacons carried a strong feeling of responsibility for the welfare of the Church. Members not in order on the point of dress or on other lines were spoken to by the deacons. Cases are known where young people were told that unless they dressed more in keeping with the customs of the Church, they would be dealt with on the matter. In cases where a member married a member of another body of believers, they were advised to join the same Church. This was considered good housekeeping, as it was called. The aim was to keep the Church free from any influence that would lead away from the customary beliefs and practices. Any deviation on the point of apparel was considered a mark of losing one's relationship with God. The Church stood for a clean heart, a clean life, and separation in dress. These brethren were of the opinion that any drifting, on the part of anyone,

from the rules and regulations as recognized would finally lead the Church in the wrong direction.

The early growth of the Church was not by revival efforts, as at present. The daily walk of the members influenced others to follow Christ. The responsibility of reaching other souls was not left to the ministers. Each convert felt responsible to win others for the Master's service. At any service, individuals had the privilege of expressing their desire to join the Church as a full communicant member. Salvation was a matter of finding peace with God, having peace with their fellowmen, and being willing to be baptized and take up the cross and follow Jesus. Following Jesus was considered both a duty and a privilege.

So converts were being added continually. The matter of revivals as held today was of later date. The first revival meeting in this district similar to those held later throughout the brotherhood was in 1894. This does not mean that there were no outstanding periods of revival. Converts in the early history of the Church were those who joined in full fellowship and were willing to follow Jesus all the way. Mere confessing or professing did not put individuals in the class called converts. Only those who were baptized and changed their way of living were considered converts.

In 1863 and in 1886 waves of revival swept this district. There were about fifty converts in 1886. Soon after this date, so many stars fell at one time that some thought the world was coming to an end. There was a rush from barns and houses to see the sight of falling stars, almost like heavy rain drops for number. One old sister left her griddle on which she was making pan cakes to see what was happening. Such manifestations in nature resulted in hearts turning to God. These



fathers who rightly put the worship of God above everything else, considered any disaster a blessing if it brought hearts in humble obedience to the foot of the Cross.

When the Conoy Church was built a protracted meeting, as they were sometimes called, was announced. It was at first announced to continue one week, but some members objected to a continued meeting of this kind. Due to the opposition, and for the sake of peace, the announcement was changed. It was then stated that the services would continue for three nights, and if the interest was good, it might continue longer. Continued services night after night were something new and most of the services in the early history of the Church were in the daytime, and never for a full week. The Church has always been cautious of anything new, or of any new methods. Much of this attitude was due to the teaching of the Word concerning false spirits and false leaders who would lead away from the flock.

The first revival held in the Cross Roads Church in 1894 came about in this way. Some of the members wanted a continued meeting at the Church, while others objected. So a certain Brother offered the use of his home for a period of evening services. This offer was accepted and the first night there were two converts, and deep conviction fell on the people. After the second service, the interest was so great that the house would not hold the crowds. It was then decided to hold the meeting in the Church, and a great revival was the result.

Donegal district has continued from the first to be one of the strongest and largest sections of the Church. The many services now held are well cared for in four well built, and well kept Church buildings. The Cross Roads place of wor-



ship was built of brick in the year 1877. In 1888 a frame Church was built, called Conoy. In 1902 the Cross Roads Church was rebuilt and this time bricks were not used. In 1910 a large Church building was built in Elizabethtown. For a number of years a union Church house was used not far from Maytown. In 1922 the District built their own Church in Maytown, and discontinued the use of the union house. In 1923 the Conoy Church was remodeled and an addition annexed.

Church congregations developed in other parts of Pennsylvania, and in Canada, before Lancaster County was divided into three Districts. But instead of considering congregations in the order of starting, we shall first give space to the other two districts of Lancaster County.

**MANOR-PEQUEA DISTRICT.** This was the first District to have an Overseer apart from the rest of Lancaster County. These Conestoga Brethren, as they were called at first, date back to the early years of the Church. The forming into a separate district came about in this way. The first two Overseers of the Church had finished their service and the time came for the appointment of another leader. When the vote was taken for the third Overseer, there was a tie between John Gish and Jacob Hostetter. Gish took charge of what later became the Donegal and Rapho districts and other sections which had developed, while Hostetter took charge of the Conestoga brethren.

My reader will no doubt notice that this account does not quite harmonize with the statement given earlier concerning three Overseers in the Lancaster County brotherhood before new districts were formed. Several conflicting accounts have

been given concerning the division into three districts of this part of the Church. It makes little difference, however, if Jacob Hostetter took charge of Manor-Pequea exactly the same time that John Gish took charge of the rest of the County, or whether it was soon afterwards. No doubt some time intervened between the time Gish took charge and the time Hostetter took charge. As to these brethren having an equal number of votes is a matter of verbal information, and, like other traditional accounts, may be accepted when no facts are present to disprove them.

Jacob Hostetter was born September 6th, 1799. When twenty-six years of age he married. He was about twenty-seven years of age when converted and a few years later he was chosen for the office of the ministry. He was made Overseer at the age of forty and continued in this office to the age of ninety. Hostetter was zealous for the cause he represented and discouraged cooperative work with other denominations. He was known as a repentance preacher.

The above date is the only one in possession which gives light on the length of time Jacob Strickler served the Church as its second Overseer. The first Overseer, Jacob Engle, died in 1833. If John Gish and Jacob Hostetter took charge as Overseers at the same time, and in 1839, then Jacob Strickler served as Overseer for a short period of six years.

Jacob N. Graybill was the second Overseer of the Manor-Pequea district. Brother Graybill was born October 29, 1811, and died August 16, 1892. He was converted at the age of thirty-three, and became Overseer at the age of sixty-one. He was the first preacher of the River Brethren to preach in the English language, in Lancaster County. He was an able speaker and in great demand. His zeal for the cause of Christ

resulted in long trips on horseback to preach the message of salvation to people in other parts.

John Brenneman, one of the early ministers of this district, lived near Quarryville. Brenneman was well known and was much respected as a godly man. One night when the Brenneman family were all asleep, robbers entered their home. Brother and Sister Brenneman were both bound and watched while one of the robbers searched the house. The thief who watched the Brennemans asked them how long they had been Christians. "For the past forty years," replied Brother Brenneman. "That's a fine thing, stick to it," said the thief.

This district never became as large as the mother district, Donegal. The growth was always healthy and somewhat progressive. In 1886 the Manor Church was built. At first there was a separate entrance for the men and the women. In 1909 the separate doors were eliminated, making the usual one entrance, as found in most Church buildings of other denominations. At first, in the Manor Church, as throughout the Brotherhood, the minister stood on the same level with the audience. It was not until 1921 that the pulpit of this Church was elevated. The Pequea Church was built in 1891. For many years these two Churches were the only public places of worship in the district. A former mission station of the Church in general was taken over by this district and a permanent place of worship was built in 1923. In 1905 the first altar services were held in the district. In 1904 the practice of using tables during the communion service was discontinued. In 1895 several members were expelled from the Church on account of having musical instruments in their homes. The first continued revival was held in 1892. The first Sunday School of the district started at Pequea Church in

1909. For many years the requirements for membership were stringent as to external form and plainness of dress. The district reports that as late as 1924 some parts were suffering because the teaching was extremely ritualistic and lacked real spiritual power.

**RAPHO DISTRICT.** This district claims its origin in 1872, when Lancaster County was divided into three districts. The account as given by this district is that there were two Overseers before this, but no district divisions were made. In 1872 a vote was taken over the County for three fathers to shepherd the work. The election resulted in Jacob Graybill being placed in charge of Manor-Pequea; Jacob M. Engle in charge of Donegal, and Benjamin Shelley in charge of Rapho. This account would make the early leadership from the first stand thus: Jacob Engle as Overseer from 1778 to 1833, providing he served until the time of his death, Jacob Strickler from the time the first Overseer ceased to act as Overseer until 1839; John Gish from 1839 to 1872, Jacob Hostetter assisting John Gish as Overseer in the section below Lancaster, and then the division into three districts, as stated above.

Rapho district under the faithful leadership of Benjamin Shelley contended earnestly for the faith delivered to them by their fathers. As a whole, this district has had a continuous healthy spiritual atmosphere from its beginning. Yet, at times it was necessary to steer the Church from being too formal and over-conservative. This wing of the Church has been faithful in carrying out the noted adage not to be the first to try the new, nor the last to leave the old.

A visit to this flourishing farm section will never be forgot-



ten. The homes are large and well kept; the land is well tilled; the barns are of the size needed to care for the bountiful crops, and the fences (where fences are still used), are not down and neglected. The Church buildings and grounds are given the same care as the homes and farms. The first Church building was erected in 1880 at Mastersonville, on the farm of Joseph W. Brubaker. Later, two splendid Churches were erected, one at Mt. Pleasant in 1900, and one at Manheim, in 1910. Before the building of churches the homes and barns proved quite adequate for public services.

It has been the aim of the Rapho district to fulfill the command found in Acts 6:3: "Wherefore brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business." The list is quite long of both faithful ministers and deacons. Three of the earliest men were Jacob Thuma, a minister born in 1799, whose grave can be seen at Mastersonville, Christian Brubaker, born in 1772, buried at Mastersonville, and John Brubaker, born in 1827, who is also buried at Mastersonville.

Rapho district as well as other parts of the Church have found the deacons to be much needed on many lines. They visited the members at least once a year, collected necessary funds to care for the poor and other Church needs, and looked after the Church buildings and grounds. On love feast occasions and at regular services, these faithful "servers of tables" were on hand. In the absence of a minister, these brethren without knowing in advance, would take charge of the service, and, if necessary, would speak to the people.

The following quotations are part of the contents of two early letters written by deacon brethren:



Beloved brother, I wish to inform you that we are all well, hoping that these lines will find you enjoying the same rich blessing. I received yours of yesterday, and the twenty dollars inclosed for missionary purposes. I appreciate your kind wishes and in return wish the same to you. Your brother in the bonds of peace.

The next letter starts:

Much Beloved Brother: In the bonds of Christian love greeting. This leaves us enjoying good health for which we are always thankful and hope it may meet you enjoying the same blessing. The reason I am writing to you is about missionary affairs or concerning sending out brethren to preach the Gospel.

These letters show the feelings and attitudes that early deacons held one toward another. They also reveal that the Church was interested in missions before there was a foreign or home mission board.

This district was one of the last to continue the use of tables during the communion service. There was something beautiful about this method of taking the Eucharist. It seems evident that the idea was to fulfill as nearly as possible the method used by our Lord. No doubt the fact that some other Churches in the community used tables had an influence on the Brethren in Christ to build their first churches so that tables could be used. The practice of using tables at communion was not continued in all of the extensions of the brotherhood to other parts. This fact later had its reaction and made the Lancaster County brethren feel that the tables were not necessary. Another thing which entered into the discontinuance of them was the fact that there were more communicants at the service than the tables would accommodate.

By visiting the first churches built in this section, and in some other parts of the brotherhood, one can see how the seats were made so they could be used as tables. The back of the

seat was fastened to the rest of the bench at the ends. The iron which holds the end acts as a hinge so that the back can be lifted and fastened in a horizontal position. This back can be turned not only horizontal but will swing on over, forming a back rest on either side of the bench. Thus, every third row of seats would be changed into a table with a bench and back rest on each side. A whole Church arranged this way with the addition of white cloths on the tables would indeed make the place seem like one long communion table, such as was used by our Lord at the last supper. It is no wonder some of the members took it hard when the council finally decided to cease using tables.

At a council meeting in this district about the year 1915 the question of discontinuing the use of tables at communion was handled. Many speeches in Pennsylvania Dutch and in English were made. Some pleaded for the continuance of the method, while others were asking for a change. Those asking that the tables be no longer used had the argument that the rest of the brotherhood in Lancaster County had all changed. One brother in the council received the disapproval of the rest when he suggested that they would have enough tables for communion providing there would not be so many visitors from other districts. This, in reality, is what caused the tables to go out of use. The large assemblage from far and near made the audience too large to use the former method.

**FRANKLIN COUNTY DISTRICTS.** As early as 1825 a number of members moved to Franklin County, and this became the second strongest section of the Church. It is only natural to give our attention next to this larger part of the Church, even if it was not the first extension in Pennsylvania

outside of Lancaster County. Lebanon County may have received members of this faith before Franklin. It is known that some of the first members in Franklin County came from Lebanon County, rather than from Lancaster County. It is also certain that a number moved directly from Lancaster County to Franklin County.

The Franklin County wing of the Church in 1940 included all the members and churches in the County and two other churches, one in Maryland, and one in the upper end of Cumberland County. The work is divided into two main parts, known as South Franklin and North Franklin. South Franklin is divided into three districts and North Franklin into two districts. Ringgold in Maryland, Hollowell, and Fairview are the church buildings in the Ringgold district. The New Guilford, Antrim, and Five Forks church buildings are in the New Guilford district, and the Montgomery church building is in the Montgomery district. North Franklin was for a period of time divided into two parts, known as upper North Franklin and lower North Franklin, later called Mowersville district.

From dates given of the building of Church buildings in which to worship, instead of continuing the use of barns and houses for this purpose, the New Guilford Church was the third in the Brotherhood. This Church was built in 1870 and was remodeled in 1914. It was built on John Sollenberger's farm which farm was owned in 1920 by Rev. Henry Brechbill. The fourth Church building to be erected in the Brotherhood was the Ringgold Church in Maryland, built in 1871. Airhill Church was built in 1881, Five Forks in 1885, and Antrim in 1885. A number of other churches in these districts were built later. The Franklin County Churches were not completed with seats which could be turned into tables for communion, as was done in Lancaster County. A number of

these Franklin County Church buildings were built of brick burnt from the clay in the section of the Church building.

The Ringgold Church in 1940 was one of the least changed buildings in the Brethren in Christ Church. This has reference only to the first churches built. The well built brick Church at Ringgold with the historical cemetery nearby will continue to be a landmark for years to come. Inhabitants of the village of Ringgold remember their fathers telling how the clay for this church was dug across the road from where the building stands, and how the bricks were made. There is a strong foundation of limestone on which the mason-work of red brick is continued. The basement was built for love feast services. The main part of the basement has long pine tables with common wooden benches on either side. At one end of the basement there are two rooms, namely a pantry and a kitchen. The pantry has shelves for food, and the kitchen has cupboards for dishes and a place for cooking. Ascending the stairs from the basement kitchen, one enters the main audience room. There is a door to the left as one enters the audience room from the kitchen. This is the entrance to the combined cloak room for the sisters and cradle room for the babies. The main audience room had a long table at one side of the church which was for the ministering brethren. Soon after 1930 part of this long table was removed and put to private use by a member of the Church. The ceiling of the audience room is supported by wooden posts. The walls and ceiling consist of white plaster coated with lime. The sleeping apartment above the audience room is divided by a long partition, running lengthwise with the gable of the church. The building was at first lighted with candles and later by oil lights. The candle holders were composed of tin in the shape of a saucer with a little band at the side in which the



large finger could be inserted to balance the light. The tube-like projection above the saucer shaped part was about four inches high and held the candle in place. On the side of the candlestick upon the saucer part was a nipper with a pocket on the one side to catch the snuff taken from the candles.

If one could go back to these early days one would see coming to the Churches fathers and mothers, with their families. An open wagon, without springs and with straw in the back for the children, was used for a conveyance. The attire of the father when riding to Church was an overcoat which reached to his knees, including a large cape over the shoulders and a broad rimmed hat on his head. On his feet were red topped boots reaching to his knees, and in cold weather, homespun mitts kept his hands warm and the cape on the overcoat was lifted over the head to protect the neck and ears. The mother, attired in gray, the color used by the early members, and wearing a bonnet with a ten to twelve inch cape and a shawl for the shoulders, rode beside the husband on a broad seat without springs.

During religious services the ministers, deacons, and their wives sat on the front seats. The ministers and their wives faced the audience, with the men back of the speaking table and the wives at one end of the long seat. The deacons and wives sat on the first row from the speaking table, with men at one end, and the sisters at the other end, all facing the ministers. The older members of the Church sat next to the deacons and their wives, and the middle aged folks and the younger people sat next with the sisters on one side and the brethren on the other side.

Love feast occasions were always the biggest events at the



Church. On these occasions the pantry was stored with food, the kitchen sent forth an odor of cooked meat and the smell of coffee, and the whole basement was set with tables to serve the large number of people who attended. About a week before the feast occasion an announcement was made in the Church service that on a certain date the members were invited to come together to prepare. The willing workers came together and cleaned the whole building, in preparation for the feast.

The services of the Church consisted of prayer meetings, preaching services, and love feast occasions including the communion. The prayer meetings held during the week consisted of prayer, singing, and testifying. In the early days the testimonies were often long and serious, each one telling of his or her conversion, sorrows, joys, and future hope. Conversion was sometimes spoken of as "joining the meeting house." Some, when testifying, would speak of how they converted themselves. These expressions would seem strange today, but in those days they were sincere expressions of the heart. The preaching was mostly commenting on passages of Scripture, interspersed with warning and with hope for a better place than this world. The love feast occasion consisted of singing, testifying, and comments on Ephesians the fourth chapter, First Corinthians the eleventh chapter, St. John the thirteenth chapter, and the account of the Lord's death from one of the Gospels. The last service of the first day of the two-day feast was the commemoration of the ordinance of feet washing and the communion. For further information on the Church's doctrine and practices, see chapter ten on Church polity, doctrines, and customs (38).

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CHURCH IN PENNSYLVANIA, Continued

In 1825 South Franklin was one district with one Overseer. Christian Lesher was in charge, and Henry Funk was the other minister. The next Overseer was Joseph Wingert, who had been elected to the ministry in 1845. He was made Overseer in 1857 and died in the year 1878. Brother Wingert, sometime before his death, asked for an assistant, the request was granted, and the choice fell on Henry Lesher, who became the third Overseer, of this part of the Church, in 1864. In 1867 Aaron C. Wingert sold his farm and bought a home near Ringgold, Maryland. The same year Henry Lesher moved from near Waynesboro to near Upton, not far from the Montgomery Church. Aaron C. Wingert moved from North Franklin district, where he had been Overseer. Through the moving of these Overseers, South Franklin found itself with three leaders at one time. In that each leader was living in a different section of the territory, it was decided to divide the work into three districts, but to retain a joint council which has continued until 1940.

After the division, the leadership stood thus: Joseph Wingert was in charge of New Guilford, Aaron C. Wingert was in charge of Ringgold, and Henry Lesher was in charge of Montgomery. The first Overseer, Christian Lesher, is buried at Ringgold; and the first Overseer of Guilford, after the division into three parts is buried at Brown's mill cemetery, near Greencastle, Pennsylvania.

North Franklin for many years has been an important wing of the Church. The first members of this section moved from Lebanon County. Some of them were Christian Brechbill, Christian Oberholser, John Hoover, and John Bert. The origin of this part as a distinct district took place when a vote was taken for Overseer about 1865. Samuel Zook and Aaron C. Wingert were elected by tie vote. Due to the tie, the work was divided into two parts; namely, North Franklin, with Brother Wingert in charge, and lower North Franklin, which was later called Mowersville district, with Samuel Zook in charge. Brother Zook moved to Kansas later, and Brother Wingert moved to Ringgold. Brother Zook seemed to have special ability to encourage the flock and to cheer those in sorrow.

The next Overseer was Martin H. Oberholser, who had charge of both Air Hill and Mowersville. Under his wise leadership the work prospered for over forty years. The Church of North Franklin had a period of forty years of peace as was true of Israel under leaders fully yielded to God. The spirit of Brother Oberholser was a desire to give his best to the work of the Lord at any sacrifice. His was a true humility that did not think in terms of Church offices, which bring satisfaction to self for a short period of time. His thoughts were higher, and his life of loving service was like the Master's in being interested in the welfare of the Church, both at home and in other parts. Brother Oberholser was one of the group of brethren who spent August the thirty-first together at Grantham, in 1932.<sup>1</sup> Your author has always

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1. At Grantham, August 31, 1932, a group of brethren—Martin H. Oberholser, Henry H. Brechbill, Jacob N. Martin, Amos B. Musser, T. A. Long, Peter M. Climenhaga, Eli M. Engle, Abram Z. Hess, F. S. Brubaker, D. F. Kipe, Harry C. Shank, Benjamin S. Brubaker, John B. Niesley—spent the day together reminiscing and in Christian fellowship.

considered it a rare privilege to have been ordained to the ministry by S. R. Smith, the first Overseer of Grantham District, and Brother Oberholser. The prayer of Brother Oberholser and the sound of his voice still linger.

This district is well supplied with Church buildings. The large Air Hill Church was built in 1881. In 1888 a church was built in the district and named Pleasant Hill. In 1894 a church was built at Mt. Rock. Other church buildings in the district are the Chambersburg Church, the Mowersville Church, and the Green Springs Church. Some of the early ministers serving these churches were Eli Martin, Israel Solenberger, B. B. Musser, and Abram Wenger.

In 1933 the Montgomery Church in Franklin County still had the center partition between the pews on one side of the church and the pews on the other side. This was the last church in the county, of the Brethren in Christ Churches, to retain this partition for separating the brethren from the sisters. This idea of separating the men and women during services came down through the centuries from the practice in the Synagogues. The partition in this church was made of wide boards running lengthwise, and it was three inches higher than the back of the seats. This was also the last Church to retain the long pulpit tables. This table was measured in 1934, a short time before it was replaced by a modern pulpit. The original pulpit consisted of two tables standing end to end, built of white pine. The length of each table was fifteen feet and two inches. The top consisted of two boards one inch thick and one foot wide, making the table top fifteen feet, two inches by two feet wide, and one inch thick. The height was that of an average eating table. Each table had six square legs tapering from a four-inch square at the top to a three-

inch base. A five-inch board running lengthwise and crosswise tied the top to the legs. It was customary for each table to have one drawer in the center about two feet wide, and three and one-half inches deep.

Brother Joseph Byers told how the bricks were made for these Franklin County Churches. The clay was dug, mixed and tempered. To obtain the proper mixture a mill was used. A horse hitched to a pole fastened to a cog wheel furnished the power to run the mixer. After the clay was ready to be formed it was placed in sand covered molds. After this the clay was removed from the molds and dried. When properly dried, the bricks were stacked and fired. The best quality bricks were used for the outer wall and the poorer grade were used for backing.

DAUPHIN AND LEBANON DISTRICT. The starting and growth of the Church in Dauphin and Lebanon Counties is rather difficult to trace. This district did not start by groups of members moving from another section of the Church. Instead, the growth was slow and gradual. Now and then one family would move into these parts, returning to worship with the Church in Lancaster County. Then prayer meetings were started in Lebanon County, as homes were open for worship. When enough members had settled in a part of the County, including the converts made in the County, regular services were arranged for. There was considerable Church development in the County by 1825. As noted in the account of Franklin County, members moved from Lebanon County to Franklin County. Towns in this beautiful valley were being founded and developed about the same time the Church was getting started in Lancaster County. It seems certain that the Church reached these parts soon after the brotherhood started,



and soon after the founding of towns in the valley. The town of Palmyra was founded in 1760. The Church started in Lancaster County about 1778. The membership in Lebanon County developed between 1778 and the early part of the nineteenth century.

The work of this district covers considerable territory, reaching from the city of Harrisburg to the city of Lebanon. The places of worship with a Church building owned by the brotherhood are Hummelstown, Fairland, and Palmyra. Services are also conducted at the Messiah Home, Harrisburg, Campbelltown, Eplars Church at Colebrook, and Shenks Church at Deodate. Services had also been held for a period of years at Chamber Hill, near Hummelstown. The Fairland and Hummelstown Churches were built in 1886. The Hummelstown building was built on the farm of Samuel Brehm, a minister of the Brethren in Christ. The Palmyra Church was purchased at a more recent date.

The first Overseer of this district was Daniel Engle, a man who lived to be ninety-four years of age. It was said of Brother Engle that he was a good shepherd. The next Overseer, a man useful at home and in surrounding districts, was Samuel Books. Other early members in the district were Engles, Brehms, Pages, Bachmoyers, Ebersoles, Shoops, Kreiders, Brubakers, Heiseys, Lights, and Snyders.

Expressions used by the early Fathers of this district were still in use in 1940. Such expressions are these: "Go to prayer meeting regularly because God goes on a rainy night as well as when it is nice," "Three things are necessary for a convert: reading the Bible daily, secret prayer, and attendance at prayer meeting," "Stick to the Lord as a burr sticks to a garment," "Be careful and vigilant in reference to your soul as

though you were carrying it in your hand," "Obedience is better than sacrifice," "To pray through means to obey God in little things even if it means to correct or rectify things with our fellowmen," "All the singing, praying, testifying or even preaching will not take the place of true obedience."

CUMBERLAND AND GRANTHAM DISTRICTS. The early background of Cumberland and Grantham districts is the same. The Church work and school work at Grantham are recent developments in the original Cumberland district. Going back to the early work we find landmarks of the Brethren in the vicinities of Mechanicsburg, toward York, toward Boiling Springs, in Perry County, and along the Yellow Breeches, including Grantham and part of York County. Among the early members were the Niesleys, Heiseys, Engles, Stauffers, Graybills, Bakers, and Myers. Brother Henry Graybill was one of the first ministers in this district. The site of the present Missionary Home at Grantham, for the use of returned missionaries, and the original buildings were at one time owned and used by John H. Myers and wife. John H. Myers is the son of John Myers, who lived in York County. The old John Myers homestead was still in use in 1940 and can be seen a short distance below the Filey's Lutheran and Reformed Church a few miles from Grantham. The grave-stones marking the graves of John Myers and wife can be seen to the right of the Gettysburg highway, a short distance above Rose Garden, going towards Dillsburg. Turn off the highway on the first road to the right after passing the road which turns into Grantham, and the graves are in an old graveyard on the left-hand side of the road. The stones are marked John Myers, Aged 69 yrs., 3 months, 20 days, Died Apr. 24, 1881. Eliza

Myers, Died Aug. 25, 1892, Aged 77 yrs. and 11 months. John Myers and also his son were ministers in the Church.

The work of the Brethren in Christ must have developed early in the nineteenth century. In those days the brethren of Cumberland district forded the stream at Grantham and Bowmansdale as they went back and forth to worship together in homes and barns of the various members. Some landmarks of special interest are the home in which Jesse Engle lived, and the home in which the Mellingers lived. These are the farms these families moved from when they left for Kansas. The barn at Grantham, which has recently been removed and replaced by a dwelling, was one of the places where love feasts were held for a period of years. This barn was a part of the property on which the missionary home now stands.

Jesse Engle, on first coming to Cumberland County, lived on the present James Baish farm, owned for many years by the Engle clan. After about eight years he moved to the present Heisey homestead, where he and his family lived until they moved west. The Heisey farm is not far from the Yellow Breeches and a short distance above Williams Grove. There is an old stone summer house on the place which was built in 1787, which is some time earlier than the Church developed in the County. The old historical Mellinger barn can be seen by following the road from Bowmansdale underneath the Reading Railroad bridge and turning left on the road passing the old Cocklin orchards. The barn is on the second sharp turn of the road a few miles from Bowmansdale. This large, typical Pennsylvania barn served well as a place for the love feast occasions.

The first development of the work in Cumberland County was small, and various accounts have been given concerning

Overseers of the work. Jesse Engle, who left for Kansas in 1879, seems to have been the first resident Overseer of the district. The Mellingers and Myers, and perhaps others, lived in the district much earlier than 1879, but the exact date of their becoming members of the Church is not in hand. John Mellinger was the next resident Overseer. In 1898 Jonathan Wert was given this responsibility. The next and last resident Overseer was John B. Niesley, who served from 1922 to 1928. At various times Overseers from other districts have had charge.

John Mellinger's father's name was Abraham Mellinger, who was also a minister. Abraham Mellinger's wife was from Lebanon and he and his wife moved to York County from New Cumberland. Abraham Mellinger is buried at Andersontown. The grave can be seen in the graveyard at the Andersontown Church of God, which Church is in the vicinity of the Mellinger barn, referred to above.

The places of worship in the Cumberland district are Mechanicsburg, Carlisle, Cross Roads, and several mission points. Mechanicsburg Church was built about 1890, and immediately after this a Church was built in Boiling Springs. Carlisle was considered as a place for a Church instead of Boiling Springs, and later developments have proved that Carlisle should have been chosen. The Church at Boiling Springs is now used as a dwelling house, while in Carlisle is a splendid Church with a prosperous work. The first Sunday School was organized in Carlisle on the corner of Louthier and Bedford streets, March 10, 1912, through the efforts of Elizabeth B. Niesley. Preaching services had been held in Carlisle in Sipes Hall, on N. Hanover street as early as 1892. In 1894 services were held in the present Church of God on West Louthier street. During 1908 services were held in



Meck's Hall, on West Louther street. April 1920, the present location was made the place of worship, until 1923, when the Old Reformed Church on West Louther street was used. January 2, 1924, the present Church was purchased and in 1934 the building was remodeled and an extension added.

The work at Grantham started first with a Sunday School. Jonathan Wert, who was made Overseer of Cumberland district in 1898 approved of the Sunday School, and fathered the work at Grantham until Samuel R. Smith was made Overseer in 1912. Grantham has never had a Church building of its own, but through the years has paid rent for the use of the Messiah Bible College Chapel as a place of worship. Before the College was built at Grantham, the Sunday School was held in the Noodle Factory, owned and operated by S. R. Smith.

MORRISON COVE DISTRICT. Crossing the mountain to a section of country near Altoona, we find the first two Church buildings of the Brethren in Christ Church in the Morrison Cove district:<sup>2</sup> These brick churches were built at Woodbury in 1867, and at Martinsburg in 1868. The Martinsburg Church was torn down and rebuilt in 1910. Another Church in this District was built in 1880 and is called Spring Hope. Mission work has developed in nearby territory at Altoona, Saxton, Sherman's Valley, and Riddlesburg. This mission work started with the work at Altoona by workers from the Morrison Cove district. It is under the supervision of the Home Mission Board and is given consideration in the chapters on mission work.

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2. See the history of Ohio, chapter eight, concerning the date of building the Valley Chapel Church.



The early leader of the work in the Cove was Abraham Bowers, who was born March 3, 1812, and died December 1, 1885. John Stoner, Peter Keagy, and Isaac Hoffman Stern were the next Overseers in the order named. The first ministers were Brothers Bare, Baret, and Andrew Bassler, and the first deacon was Michael Keagy. These leaders and the early members came from Lancaster County, the birthplace of the Church. Until the Churches were built, worship was conducted in houses and barns. This part of the Church, like a number of other parts, might have been larger if Sunday School and Young People's Meetings would have been started sooner. In the early days of the Church, young people were not encouraged to take up Church membership, so they waited to take this step until after marriage.

It is claimed that the first group of members gathering for worship met at the home of John Stoner in the stone house near Martinsburg. This house was built in 1827. In this home the parent congregation of the Brethren in Christ Church of Morrison Cove was organized. The date of this organization was in 1829 or 1830. There were visiting Brethren present at this service from Lancaster County, but the names of those present have not been found. Andrew Bassler was the minister in charge of this first service. In those days it was a long ride by horse back or wagon from Lancaster County to these counties on the other side of the seven mountains. The warm welcome and real Christian fellowship was of itself sufficient to pay for the journey.

Other points of the development in Pennsylvania are Bucks and Montgomery Counties, Philadelphia, Lykens Valley, Juniata and Mifflin Counties, and Center and Lycoming Counties.

BUCKS AND MONTGOMERY DISTRICTS. The work in the section of Bucks and Montgomery district started quite early in the history of the Church. Two old sisters, one a daughter of the first members, and the other a sister ninety-one years of age, gave the following information. The one sister said when her parents moved into the neighborhood later known as the Bucks and Montgomery District, the people were actually afraid of her father with his long beard and heavy cape overcoat. When the first members were seen going to services, they were called by some "wolves in sheep's clothing." The people soon changed their minds about them being wolves in sheep's clothing. As they watched them in their daily walk, they soon found out these were men of God. Instead of remaining afraid, they came to them for help. The one old sister remembered how neighbors sent for her father in the night to come and pray with them.

When the work of the Church first started in this section of Pennsylvania, some who attended the services had no way to come but to walk. Some sisters left home at five o'clock in the morning and walked twelve miles to help get ready for love feast occasions. There was a great interest in the work of the Church. Some drove sixteen miles in springless wagons to attend services. Jacob Graybill came from Lancaster County on horse back and did not reach the place the love feast was being held until eight P.M. The day was rainy and it grew dark early in the evening. Due to the darkness, he lost his way and traveled some distance in the wrong direction. These walkers and riders have gone to their reward, but the seed they sowed is bringing forth a harvest.

In most sections of the Brotherhood the work started by some one of the faith of the Church moving from another lo-

cality. In this case it was different. Henry Gotwals and John Gotwals were converted through a Methodist Evangelist, but found later they could not feel at home to fellowship with those under whom they were led to Jesus, so these new converts drove to Lancaster County in white-covered springless wagons and were baptized by the River Brethren, as they were then called. Later, Overseers from Lancaster County came on horseback and baptized other interested converts. This dates back to about 1825, or soon after. In those days members did not wait for an invitation to come and attend services. Brethren out of a heart of love would make trips from other counties to encourage those of like faith. Brethren especially remembered by this district for their loving service are Jacob Hostetter, Johnny Gish, John Engle, Jacob Engle, Henry Engle, Jacob Niesly, and Samuel Brehm.

John Cassel became the first Overseer in Bucks County in the year 1846. Brother Cassel used to go by horseback to Lehigh and North Hampton Counties and preach wherever he found an open door. New Churches did not always result from these missionary trips, but many souls were helped. In 1883 a Church building was erected at Silverdale and later Churches were built at Trappe and at Souderton. Some of the first ministers were John Gotwals, Henry Graybill, and Christian Haldeman. In 1940 this district divided into two small sections.

The work in Philadelphia, if considered as a district, would be taken up next. Since it started as a mission and has for most of the time been considered as a mission point, the history of this work will be dealt with in the chapters on mission work.

LYKENS VALLEY DISTRICT. In the year 1829 several brethren who had their residence in the lower end of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, moved with their families to Lykens Valley. Brother Joseph Keefer was the first minister in this new part of the Church. These first members were a gazing stock in this new territory on account of their beards, shad belly coats, and low broad brimmed hats, and the sisters with their head coverings were a wonder to all. These early members were in earnest and showed by their walk and conduct on Whom they believed. Their adorning was not the outward adorning, but that of a meek and quiet spirit which God so highly values. Brother Keefer was made Overseer in 1831, and about the same time Jacob Landis was elected minister and Jacob Heinike deacon.

The Church bought a plot of ground for a cemetery and a schoolhouse. There was no free school provided until some years later. George Hinkle and wife united with the Church and they took an interest in both the school and the cemetery. There was, at first, no railroad nearer than Harrisburg. Brethren from other parts came many miles to visit the group in this valley. Some came on horseback and others in plain, common wagons, some of the wagons had white muslin covers and all had wooden springs.

From 1834 to 1835 a spirit of repentance and conversion broke out among the young people and the older ones, as well. One prayer meeting was never forgotten by those present. The service was in Brother Keefer's home, and the room was full, so many became penitent that only a few were yet unconverted when the brethren arose from prayer. Many of these converts joined the Church the following spring.

A number of members moved from York County to the

Valley, and among them was Levi Lukenbach. This is where Brother Lukenbach was elected to the ministry in 1835. More reference will be made to this brother in the future discussions. The ministering brethren were invited to different points by friends not members of the Church. One appointment was in Armstrong Valley every twelve weeks at the home of John Lentz. Lentz was a quiet man and believed in the work of the Church. At his death these services were discontinued, but some of the family became members. Every eight weeks in summer, and every twelve weeks in winter, the Brethren had services for about fifty years in Powl's Valley at Longs Church.

For a number of years peace and unity prevailed in the Lykens Valley district. Later some became discontented in that the land was poor, hilly and sandy, so they sold their farms and moved to other parts. Brother Lukenbach moved to Center County Pennsylvania, several families moved to Illinois, and others at a later date moved to Kansas. With so many leaving the Church work, it was rather discouraging for awhile, but those remaining faithfully continued, to care for the work. The Church building was erected in 1888 and a basement extension was added in 1916.

**JUNIATA AND NEARBY COUNTIES.** In the nature of mission work the influence of the Church spread to Juniata, Mifflin, Clinton, Center, and Lycoming counties. This section has been more or less the nature of a mission field for many denominations over a period of years. One need only take one trip to these Counties to learn of their beauty and to learn of the spirit of hospitality which is shown everywhere. It is impossible to give an exact picture of the development of the Brethren in Christ Church in these parts, which extended over



a period of many years. The two districts which take in the five Counties really have no boundary lines. Before 1930 the one district reported their boundary line as including all of Juniata and Mifflin, and the other district claimed all of Clinton, Center, and Lycoming counties. The fact is they knew no lines and worked wherever there was an open door.

The Longs Church in Powl's Valley referred to above is in Lycoming County. Not only did the brethren from Lykens Valley preach here, but from other parts as well. Samuel Brehm, of Hummelstown, preached in this community. It is worth anyone's time to go to see this very old Church. It is about twenty-five miles from Williamsport on a lone country road. The front door is one slab of wood cut from one of those large pine trees of this section. The main parts of the building are entirely of logs. These logs without a splice reach the full length of the structure.

Some of the members in Clinton County were Boyers, Shaffers, Stoners, Tysons, Millers, Longs, and Bowers. Most of these members moved from Dauphin County before the Civil War. At first these members rented wherever they could find land, for much of the country was still timber in those days. As time went on, most of them purchased their own homes. Some of the ministers were Levi Lukenbach, Lewis Shaffer, Conrad Long, James Antes, and T. Avery Long. Conrad Long visited throughout the brotherhood both in United States and Canada, preaching wherever he went. Levi Lukenbach moved from this section to Ohio.

One can almost feel he is hearing one of these fathers preach when reading the following:

In looking over the Church of today I am forced to conclude that the sisters are required to exercise more self-denial as far as clothing

is concerned. I must say here that it grieves me to see young brethren wear their hats bulged in on each side and on top. Let anyone ask the question, where did the style originate, not from the Godly Fathers, but from fops, from the ungodly, sinful class, same as the mustache. The time was when no respectable man would wear a mustache, but little by little it grew into popularity. So with nearly all wrong things. May our young men show their zeal for God that the vain trifling things of the world be beneath their Christian dignity.

This was written by T. Avery Long when an old man. This was his answer to what changes had come in the Church.

The real zeal of these fathers is better set forth in a letter written by Brother Long, January, 1924. He wrote this in answer to an inquiry concerning the first revival meetings held in the Brotherhood:

I am very sorry that I cannot give you the information I would like to and could if I had kept a detailed record. I had quite a missionary spirit and zeal to do good from my early Christian life; and may truthfully say that involuntarily I began visiting families, reading the Word and praying with all. I was called to the ministry October 22, 1872. Those times we had no evangelists set apart or subject to call but brethren who were impressed to go out and labor away from home could do so by paying their own expenses. One also received opposition which gave no tendency to stir up vanity or to create pride. Little by little brethren were inclined to hold meetings a few evenings at a time and none that I can now recall continued more than one week.

I shall never forget in those early days of protracted meetings, I was called to Ohio and the Brethren arranged four meetings each to continue one week. Brother Benjamin Gish also seemed led to hold protracted meetings. He then lived in Lancaster County. I think it was between forty and fifty years ago that he and I went up through the western part of the state, thence to Clarence Center, New York, and from there to Canada for about four nights. From Canada we went to Michigan where we had a number of meetings. From here we went to Indiana where we had several weeks' meetings and a great revival broke out. Bishop John Stump was converted in this meeting. This revival was unlike many in that it did not stop after we left but continued for some time and many were brought to

Christ. I think our trip lasted thirteen weeks. I think it was about the longest evangelistic services held by the Brethren up to that time. Sometime after this trip brother Noah Zook and I were sent to Carland, Michigan where we had a blessed revival. Those times the brethren thought it advisable to send out two by two. There was no organization at Carland up to this time. Eighteen were baptized after the meeting and a deacon was elected. When the Church building was erected brother Davidson and I were sent to dedicate it. I am yours in Christian love.

A number of Church buildings have been erected in these Counties, and others were purchased or used in connection with other denominations. The main places of worship are Cedar Grove Church, and Granville. The first resident minister of Lycoming County was H. T. Frey, who moved from Lancaster County in 1920. The work at Fox Hollow Church which laid the foundation for the present results was started by B. Frank Long. Services are also held at the Butternut Grove School House and in the homes near Proctor. The first four main places mentioned are in Clinton and Lycoming, which counties have been given consideration. Granville is a Home mission point and will be considered later.

Cedar Grove Church belongs to Mifflin and Juniata District. This work dates back to the middle of the first half of the nineteenth century. There was no regular place of worship until 1876, when David Moist and John Book bought a schoolhouse and used it for a Church. At first it was called the Pike Meeting House, but it was named later, Mt. Pleasant Church. The brethren from this district would often walk from this section to Lykens Valley for love feast occasions, a distance of thirty miles. This district had no regular revival until 1915 and no Sunday School until 1920. The Cedar Grove Church was built in 1930. Some of the names sacred

to the memory of older members are Moist, Book, Kauffman, Shirk, and Leyder (38).

With this glimpse of the history of the Church in Pennsylvania in mind, we shall turn to more distant developments. From Brother Long's account we have seen how one from Clinton County was interested in reaching other parts with the Gospel. He went both west and north. Let us turn north to the Church in Canada. These Canadian brethren did not stop in the middle counties of Pennsylvania, but pressed on into more distant lands.

## CHAPTER V

### CANADIAN CHURCH

The history of the Brethren in Christ in Canada is robed in adventure and courage. None but brave hearts would in those earlier days dare to pierce into the North Country with the many handicaps of travel. It took courage to leave the new formed government of the United States of America and with the U. E. Loyalists seek a home in a land under the rule of the Mother Country, England, from which United States had freed herself. Many of our fathers who left Europe for America did so out of a desire for freedom to worship God with full liberty of conscience and practice. But other reasons for leaving the United States for Canada are evident from the situation as it existed when the first members of the Church moved to Ontario.

Some of these early settlers in Ontario were loyalists in two ways. A loyalist is one who adheres to and defends his sovereign or lawful government and opposes rebellion or insurrection. Some of the first members of the Church in Canada were among those who adhered to the crown of Great Britain during the war for independence from 1775-1783. Those loyal to the Crown left the colonies, which separated from the Mother Country, and moved north to Canada which remained with Great Britain. However, not all who went north as members of the Church were loyalists. The opportunities of a new country with cheap land from the government was perhaps the main point of interest. That which motivated



the settling in a new land was about the same as the motivation which at a later date caused members of the Church to move west to Ohio, Illinois, and Kansas.

The other way in which these early members were loyalists is in their being faithful to their sovereign, the Lord Jesus. They took their faith with them and sowed a seed which developed into an active body of religious worshippers. Instead of being swallowed up by the beliefs they found in Canada, they gave to this new land an example of a sincere form of worship which dared to be different, because they believed in what they practiced. This separation from the Church in United States would have been an opportunity to drop the customs of the Church which have to some extent made the members of the Brethren in Christ Church a marked people in the world. Instead of using this opportunity for greater freedom, the Canadian Church has remained faithful through the years to the doctrines and principles of the example set by the first members to this new land.

In 1918 several brethren, with the endorsement of others, published a small pamphlet concerning the origin and history of the Brethren in Christ Church in Canada. The account of the origin of the Church as given is an exact copy of an article written by Abraham H. Cassel, an historian of the Church of the Brethren written in 1882 at the request of Charles Baker of Canada. A copy of this article, with due credit given to the author, is in the appendix of this book. This pamphlet on page five refers to rules of faith dated 1799, and mentions that they were lost. An original copy of these rules of faith has been found and a translation of the content is given in this book. The remainder of the pamphlet deals with Hans Winger, the first minister of the Brethren in

Christ in Canada. This brief history took effort on the part of those who had it published and the Canadian Church appreciates the contribution to the historical records of the Church. No other account of the first developments of the Church in Canada was known until 1924.

When returning from a visit to the Wainfleet District in 1924, your author and some friends visited the Damude sisters living in the village of Fonthill, west and north of Welland. These two sisters, matured in years, lived alone at the edge of the village. They were both school teachers and faithful Church members. They lived in the old Damude homestead which, itself, was history. But that which is of interest to my readers is this: These teachers had in their possession information handed down from their grandfather concerning the first minister of the Brethren in Christ Church in Canada and his sisters. In the warmth and welcome of this home, which only homes, that are years in the making, really possess, the old record was brought forth and the information thereon imparted. This was reliable history long sought and not found. The finding was nothing less than one of those rich experiences historians have from time to time. The unexpected suddenly is revealed through the guiding hand of the Keeper of the destiny of man. One of the sisters of this Damude family said: "I am proud of my ancestry, I am proud to come from a people who were willing to leave their mother country and come to America so they could perpetuate their faith in the things of God."

West of Fonthill, a short distance, and down the slope to the right, is the place where Hans Winger, the first Overseer of the Brethren in Christ Church in Canada, settled. (The name, Hans, is the same as John, or Hounsley). It is claimed

that this Hans Winger was the first minister in Ontario, outside of the English clergy, to receive a grant from the Government to perform marriages. The Presbyterian Church was the next Church to receive such a grant. Henry Damude married Anna Winger, a sister of Hans Winger. One of the children of this marriage was David Damude. Anna Elizabeth Damude, one of the daughters referred to above, is a daughter of David Damude. It was Anna Elizabeth who gave most of this history of Hans Winger and his sisters.

Hans Winger, with his two sisters, must have gone to Canada sometime before 1789, for we have the record of Jacob Engle, the first Overseer of the Church in United States, going from Pennsylvania to visit the members in Canada in the year mentioned. The sister Anna, above mentioned, who married Henry Damude, is buried in the Overhalt cemetery between Fonthill and St. Johns, on a place owned in 1924 by Charles Goldsprink. This Anna was the mother of five children. One of her daughters, named Elizabeth, married Martin Climenhaga, of near Stevensville.

Hans Winger did not remain west of Fonthill. At present this section is a rich fruit country, but in those early days it was hard to produce enough food for the settlers. It is told that Anna said that food was so scarce that she did not have enough to satisfy her hunger. The family even ventured to eat greens which they were not certain had ever been used as food. They thought what the cattle would eat man could eat and by this means they ventured to add new varieties of greens to their meals. The land in this part is sandy and forest fires swept the country, destroying much of the timber. This discouragement, along with storms and other handicaps, caused Hans Winger to move on a farm near Stevensville, Ontario,

only a few miles from the Niagara River. The Ontario Church School is now locted at the Niagara River where these fathers first crossed into Canada, and only a few miles from the old Hans Winger Homestead.

You will be interested in these direct quotations from the history received.

Anna Winger's grandmother came of a tall people. Her brother, Hounsley Winger, was a Tunkard minister.

My father, David Damude, used to like shortcake, so he was very glad when his uncle (Hans Winger) came to see them, for his mother nearly always had shortcake when he came. The uncle lived about where the Michael Slough place is. After the hurricane about two years, when burning off the pine brush on the fallow, the fire got beyond control and burned up everything. This discouraged them so that they concluded to go back to Pennsylvania, but they took another notion when they got to Black Creek, as they liked the soil there. They decided to settle on a farm by the Black Creek a few miles from the river. Grandmother's father and mother never came to this, as far as my father knew.

Henry Damude and his two half brothers, Samuel and David, came from Pennsylvania the same year, and went back and then came in again the next year, bringing with them another span of horses. Some of their horses died with Yellow Malaria from lack of hay.

Anna Winger came the same year that Henry Damude came to stay. In her party there were her sister, Mrs. Sider and husband, and her brother, Hounsley Winger, and a large number of neighbors. They were United Empire Loyalists. Although they were Tunkards, they were loyal in spirit to their Sovereign, and though they could not fight, they would not live under the United States flag.

Henry Damude came from Bucks County, Pennsylvania; Anna Winger came from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

The Winger party brought cows and other things they needed. They milked their cows in the morning, then put the milk in a keg which was in a bag, with a stone on the opposite side to balance it on the horse. In this way the milk was kept from milking to milking as they traveled. They obtained butter from the milk shaking on the horses' back.

Grandmother's mother's father was born in Switzerland. John Henry Damude's son was six feet in his stockings. Hounsley and



Anna Winger, and Mrs. Sider's grandfather, that is their mother's father, was also born in Switzerland.

The Roman Catholic power was then in force, requiring that all should do certain things, such as attending the Roman Catholic Church one Sunday each year, or at certain times. The younger people were inclined to think it did not make much difference, and doing these requirements of the law did not make them Roman Catholics at heart. But the mother would not go nor yield to the Catholic Church in any way. She said it was denying her faith. Her son had a place built in the cellar so the mother could hide, for they knew she was in danger in refusing to comply with the demands of the Catholic powers.

Sure enough the soldiers appeared and examined the house. One soldier noticed a thick place in the cellar and drew attention to it, but the others were in haste and did not believe she was there, and did not want to be bothered, so they only laughed at him, saying, 'Did you think you would find an old woman in a cellar wall?' Soon after this, they disposed of any of their belongings they could sell quietly among their friends, and leaving the rest, they came to America.

The mother who left the old country and came to America on account of her faith was the grandmother of Hans Winger and his two sisters, Anna (Winger) Damude and Mrs. Sider. The sister, Mrs. Sider, was married, as was also Hans Winger, before going to Canada.

These early members in Canada were very particular about keeping the Lord's day holy.

These members had to travel more than twelve miles to near Niagara Falls to have their grain ground. They not only had to split rails for fences, but made their own tubs and pails by hand. They grew their own flax and spun it for clothes.

This Hans Winger, the first minister of the Church in Canada, spent the remainder of his days in the Township of Bertie on a farm by the creek, named Black Creek. This creek was named Black Creek, due to the water being dark in comparison to the clear water of the Niagara river. Where this



creek empties into the river there was a railroad station for many years. Members visiting Canada after the days of horseback riding to Canada were over, came from Buffalo, New York, to this country station by train, and here were met by the Brethren. From the name of this creek and station came the name of Black Creek District, instead of Bertie District, as it should be called. The main Bertie Church is not at Black Creek, nor by the creek, but is located along the railroad a few miles west of the village of Stevensville.

The old historical graveyard in which John (Hans Winger) the first minister in Canada, is buried, is on the bank of Black Creek. The silent stream frets the bank of the graveyard as it wends its way to the Niagara. This place of burial was a small plot on the John Winger farm, used as a burial place by the family and some friends as was the custom in Pennsylvania. The grave of John Winger was found by a Church History class from Messiah Bible College. The fallen grave marker was placed together piece by piece, until the name of this early father was revealed. For a number of years David Climenhaga took a personal interest in this burial plot. His main interest was due to his relationship being buried there. He had railroad irons cut for posts and then by hand he turned wooden tops for each post. The silent stream still runs on and is just as much alive today as ever. Are those buried on its banks dead? A voice says, "No! they are living on."

In 1932 the Canadian Church did a noble deed in dedicating a new monument at the grave of John Winger. This service was well attended and many fitting remarks were made. This marker gives the date of Brother Winger's death, the year 1828. The other dates on the stone are approximate

in relation to the starting of the Church in the United States and Canada.

The original Black Creek road trailing its way along the winding stream ran through these farms owned by the first members in Canada. A part of this road is still in use at the date of this writing, 1940. Several farms in this community are still in the same family names as when received from the Government. The John Winger farm, it is claimed, was owned by another party before it came into his possession. The homestead of the late Peter Winger, the grandson of John Winger, is a part of the original Winger farm. The old house, built by the late Peter Winger, is still standing.

This house was well built. Part of the building consisted of planks three inches thick fastened to the framework with wooden pins. The building was constructed after the overshoot style of building used a great deal in Pennsylvania, with the main roof projecting over the front porch. According to the old custom dating back to the old country, the well for drinking water was in the front yard. The path from the front door to the well is of stepping stones well worn from many years of use. For many years after this house ceased to be used for a private dwelling, the customary lilac bush at the front of the house to the left continued to blossom.

One of the ministers of the Bertie Church stands out among the rest as a saint of God. Being a carpenter by trade he was asked to re-roof this Winger home. He took off half of the shingles, thinking the day was going to be fair, but toward noon a sudden thunder storm arose. Being a man full of faith, he left the roof and went to the barn and prayed that God would protect the house from rain. He came back to the

house and continued working while the rain poured down all around, but no rain fell on the Winger home. A heavy fall of rain would have done much damage to the plastered walls. Reverend Michael was a man of prayer. When he prayed at home or at Church, the presence of the Holy Spirit could be felt. When he would say Grace at the table he would lift his head with closed eyes and with the palms of his hands together pointing upward, and in the most tender tone thank God for the food. He believed and God answered his prayer.

The articles of faith referred to above as being lost and found are worthy of considerable space in this chapter on the history of the Church in Canada. When the late Charles Baker moved from his farm home to Stayner, he found the original copy in his possession written in German script. Perhaps no other document in the Church is as valuable as this Confession of Faith. The purpose of the articles was to guide the Canadian Church into the same faith and practices as the Pennsylvania Church. The faith and practices as set forth agree with the teachings of the Brotherhood at large. Evidence has been found which proves that the customs which are mentioned in these articles, but not in practice at present, were followed earlier. It is also evident from a study of the Canadian Church that the views contained in these articles molded to a great extent the teachings and customs of the Church.

The brief Canadian history referred to claimed that Peter Winger, of Bertie, at one time had a copy of these articles. Brother Charles Baker received his copy from the Heise relationship in the Markham district north of Toronto. This copy has no date. From this it would appear that there were at least two copies sent from Pennsylvania, otherwise the date of 1799 given by the pamphlet writer would have no founda-

tion. This copy found was one of the original copies as it had the original signatures of the brethren in Pennsylvania. Most of the names of the signers are familiar in the Church. The Brethren in Christ had no official name at first, and for this reason they were called Tunkers in Canada, and River Brethren in United States. This also accounts for the title of these articles of faith as of the Church of the Brethren. This name Church of the Brethren, separated them from the Dunkard Brethren, or German Baptist Brethren, or Tunker Brethren, as the present Church of the Brethren was then called.

To make certain of the correct translation into English of these articles written in German script, your author requested both Bishop Charles Baker, and a teacher of German in the Chambersburg school system to make a translation to the best of their understanding. There are slight differences in the translations, but the meaning is the same throughout. Brother Baker, being of German birth and a fluent speaker in the German language, had the advantage of the Chambersburg teacher. Another point which helped brother Baker was his knowledge of the Word of God and the doctrines of the Church. The Chambersburg teacher suggested that a member of the Church would be able to put the article into better understood English, on account of understanding the doctrinal teachings.

The names of the signers of these articles were referred to as being familiar names in the Brotherhood. The two translators differ slightly on the names of the signers. Instead of adding the names to the article, as was originally done, they are given here for the reader's convenience, as translated by Brother Baker: Philip Stern, John Myers, Jacob Engle, John Greider, John Funk, Stofel Hollinger, Zuniamin Zeyer, Daniel



Zätzner. The other translation agrees with this with the exception that Engle is spelled Engel, and that the last two names are given as Benjamin Byer and Daniel Bätzner. From the list of names known to the members early in the Church, the translation of the Chambersburg teacher seems preferable or more nearly correct on this point.

*Articles of Faith of the Church of the Brethren Translated  
from the German by Charles Baker, November, 1921*

We believe in and acknowledge one Triune Ever-existing and Almighty Being, and that this one Ever-existing Almighty God always existed and ever will exist, and has foreseen for us an Ever-existing Saviour before the foundation of the world. To learn to know this Saviour, or to find him, we must pass through true repentance unto forgiveness of sins and become reconciled with God, wrought by God, through the blood of Christ. So therefore must this faith be laid for a foundation upon the Word, and the Truth, for upon the Truth rests the whole Godhead and Majesty. And while this faith is a sure confidence, yet—since we have not this faith according to nature, it is therefore first necessary to consider where this faith takes its beginning, while Adam and all his seed lost the Godly likeness, that is, faith, love and confidence, and instead awoke fear, unrest and doubt, which we have inherited from generation to generation. But since God in the beginning had promised the serpent Treader, the Messiah, the Saviour, from the loss which man sustained, who in fulfillment of time came into the world, laying aside his glory and honour, and gave himself, both body and blood, as a ransom from this loss, and thereby has reconciled us again unto the Father. All this is all of grace, and not of works. But to know and experience this in our heart, the grace of God hath appeared, to convince and to teach us that we according to nature have wandered from God with a wayward and sinful heart. If we learn this and acknowledge it, it will work in us true repentance and sorrowfulness of heart. In short the Light reveals unto us the fall wherein Adam and we have fallen, and this causes within us longings, praying, weeping and calling upon God through the promised Redeemer, who, bleeding, died for such poor sinners, and in such a poor sinner's opened heart the Lord Jesus will then enter in and sup with him and he with Him. That is consolation, love, peace and trust bestowed. Then is our sinful record as the guilt of Adam erased. That is consolation, forgiveness of sins and receiving of everlasting life and that feels and ex-



periences every poor sinner that comes to God through Christ. Here will his name be written in the book of life, and here has the living faith its beginning, wherein the poor sinner saved, then offers and fully submits himself to the Lord Jesus to live and to be true to Him who has adopted him into the family of God. And this acknowledge we to be the new birth, renewing of the mind and receiving of the Holy Ghost. Now has the Lord Jesus become our Saviour, so shall he also be our example. And since such children now love Him, who begot them, so they also now love them that are begotten of Him. And this acknowledge we to be a believing body of Christian believers, united through the unity of the Spirit, which is the first requisite necessary for personal reception into Christian fellowship. Where this is lacking there always will remain a lack, and water cannot give or make good that which is wanting. And while we said that the Lord Jesus has become our example, so also we believe and acknowledge from the example given in the written Word, and through the leadings of the good Spirit, that the Lord Jesus Christ gave for an outward bond-token, for such new-born children the outward water baptism, having observed it Himself and His apostles, and that likewise the early churches observed the same, after denying the devil, the world and all sinful life, and were baptized by a threefold baptism under water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, as a token of the burial. We believe and acknowledge as a foundation that all true penitent, believing and forgiven souls that have upon their faith in Jesus been baptized, have entered into Zion, and all of this spiritual body, as God's children, are born, as new men, as the dew of the morning glow. We also believe that the Lord Jesus instituted the Lord's supper and observed it with his disciples, with bread and wine in the last night of his suffering when he was betrayed, that they, after his departure, when partaking of the same, should remember his broken body and shed blood for them, wherein also his disciples and followers were steadfast in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayer, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God with a joyful heart. We further believe and acknowledge that the Lord Jesus Christ at the time he instituted the Lord's supper, also washed his disciple's feet, instituted it, observed and commanded it to be observed as a token of true humility and humbleness, in obedience, out of love to Jesus, our example. Here we stand by God in grace, separated from the children of this world, yea, branches of the true vine, and members of the body of Christ. We also acknowledge a growth in grace according to the Holy Scriptures, cleansed, sanctified, and saved by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. To accomplish this, it is necessary

to have public gatherings where the Word is preached and the people are exhorted to repent. To this end there are also private gatherings necessary and helpful, where the penitent souls can confess and relate their experience in a childlike manner one to the other, by so doing the love of God in their heart will increase and their faith and their confidence be strengthened. And inasmuch as such children are exposed to many temptations, therefore such childlike confessions one to the other at such gatherings will have a tendency to uncover the craftiness of the enemy, and that good advice can be given to those present, so that the body of Christ can be built up. And since such children are yet in the flesh, there is therefore a Christian order necessary in the household of God according to Matthew 18. And furthermore, while such children are in duty bound, out of love, to watch over one another, we therefore deem it necessary that no one undertake anything of importance without asking brotherly advice in such matters that might endanger the peace and progress of the brotherhood, such as change of residence, buying of property and other important matters. We also acknowledge an order in separation of disorderly members, yet with difference, as above stated from Matthew 18, "if thy brother shall trespass against thee," etc. This, of course, can have its beginning in small matters. If the offender shows a submissive spirit and accepts the brotherly admonition in childlike love, does not defend or justify himself, neither is strong or domineering, it is all right, but if he will not acknowledge his fault, nor mend his ways, then take with thee one or two more, and at last tell it to the church. If the offender, however, is not submissive to the church, then let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. But one who is called a brother, or according to the German, "one who allows himself to be called a brother," I Cor. 5:11, but remains in sin, then there is no official investigation necessary, but only to give them into the hands of God for judgment. Notice the expression of Paul: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, II Thes. 3:6 and 14, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed." I Cor. 5:11, "But now I have written unto you not to keep company" or to eat with such who are so ungodly and have fallen into such grievous sins and to utterly withdraw yourselves from greeting them with the right hand of fellowship and with the holy kiss and in eating and drinking, until they are truly enlightened and become truly penitent. But, however, count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother. Be also helpful to such in time of necessity, in order to draw them again unto you by love. Should they become truly enlightened and in penitence and humbleness again obtain pardon for their transgres-

sion, in Jesus' blood, then will also the other members, having become acquainted with their penitence and humbleness of mind, feel the unity of the Spirit, and thus can such again be received into church membership, to comfort and to strengthen them so that they may not in over-much sorrow sink into despair. What, however, belongs to other fundamentals, such as the baptism of infants and the unconverted, we leave it with them that are satisfied therewith. Where the teachings of our Lord Jesus and that of the Apostles are silent, there we will be silent also. Then also we believe and acknowledge if two believing persons living apparently as man and wife, who before God have solemnly agreed between themselves to always live together in righteousness, that if one or the other should come to the new life, or become reconciled and yet not baptized, but is not opposed thereto, such a person has the privilege of being baptized after being united in marriage, for if souls are accepted by God, so are we also willing to accept them (to church membership.) Then also obedient brethren's children, who are obedient whilst they are under their parents, and the parents are under the church and the church under Jesus Christ, and everything else is in order and right, so can the marriage of such children take place with members in the church, with advice, and not be sent out to the world. Yet, after all it is the wish of our heart and prayer to God the All Highest, that every one and all did first unite themselves in the Spiritual marriage with Jesus the Bridegroom of the soul, and afterward the outward or natural marriage. And inasmuch as oaths are altogether forbidden in the teachings of our Lord Jesus, they are therefore also forbidden to be used by us. Matt. 5:34. The sword, revenge and self-defence are also entirely forbidden, verses 39 and 40. Out of the teachings of our Lord Jesus and his apostles we also understand that no member or follower of Jesus Christ is allowed to serve in worldly governmental offices, therefore it ought also be forbidden to us. But we ought not withstand the worldly governments, but be subject to them in all that is good, and earnestly pray for them that God may give them light and wisdom, so that they may be able to perform their duties truly. We are also exhorted to pay tribute, or protection money unto the governments, because Paul calls them God's ministers, Romans 13. And since God rules the whole universe, so God has ordained that man should rule natural men, or the world, and that is also for the good of God's children, otherwise it would still be worse to live in this world. Therefore, Paul commands us to pray for them, as above stated, so that they may be able to perform their duties truly, so that the children of God under their protection may be able to live a quiet and God-fearing life, and that they do not use the children of God as a power or force in order to

quell disturbances or to oppress or to bring others into subjection to the governments under whose protection we live. Further, we wish from God the All-Highest, that he may build and plant and keep his church in healthy growth, and that we also may be green branches on the true vine, and remain so in all the length of eternity, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

The name of the Canadian wing of the Church has caused considerable discussion and cannot go unmentioned in this account. Those who have contended for the name, Tunker, have arguments worthy of consideration as well as do those who prefer to drop the name, Tunker, altogether. In the early history given by the Damude family, you recall the first minister, John Winger, was mentioned as being a minister in the Tunker Church. You will also recall that reference was made later in this chapter concerning the name attached to the Articles of Faith as the Church of the Brethren. A body of believers without an official name would be given a name by others when no name was chosen by the group themselves. This is what actually happened. The Church was not chartered until 1904 and all names given to the body of believers up to that time grew out of locations or similarity to other religious bodies.

Names were given to local groups which never came into permanent usage. The two names which became prominent are River Brethren and Tunkers. As stated before, the name, River Brethren, grew out of the location of the first members living near the Susquehanna river. The name, Tunker, was used in Canada due to the fact that these early settlers were so much like the Dunkards or Tunkers, as the Church of the Brethren was called. This name Tunker was used in Germany before the Church of the Brethren came to America. The word, Tunker, means to dip, the same as Dunker. These two



words mean one and the same thing. The early members immersed the same as at present and the same as the Tunkers, Dunkers, or Church of the Brethren. It was just natural for those observing to call them Tunkers. Sacred memories cling to names and for this reason, if for no other, we cannot blame those who hesitate to give up the old names for the present name of the Church, Brethren in Christ. As to the value of old names in helping to retain one's relation to the Government is a matter for each generation to decide. At least old names which have gained considerable usage should be retained in historical records as a proof that the present organization is the same as formerly was known as River Brethren and Tunkers.

The trip to Canada of these first members will always be of interest. Just how many were in the group when John Winger and his two sisters went north is not known. The account of their journey is just as interesting as the record of the settlers who at a later date moved westward with their white-topped wagons. These northern-bound caravans consisted of cone-stoga wagons heavily loaded with household goods and farm equipment, pulled by horses or oxen. The cows were driven behind by members of the party. Anyone who has traveled northward from Pennsylvania, climbing hills and crossing rivers knows of the dangerous journey these early fathers took. The hilly country between southern Pennsylvania and northern New York was thinly settled and inhabited by wild animals. It took many days to make the trip which is now made by auto in one day. The time was divided between travel, resting, and feeding the group and the stock.

Crossing the Niagara river was the greatest experience. The crossing was made above Grand Island near the location



of the Ontario School. This was an adventure which tested the faith of these seekers of new homes in a new land. The only way to cross this swift deep stream was by rafts or by the use of the conestoga wagon box. Any mishap would likely have meant death in the treacherous cataract below. The rafts used were made by fastening a large number of logs together. When the wagon boxes were used the boat-like shaped box was pitched so it wouldn't leak. A number of trips were necessary across the river in that only a small amount of goods could be safely taken over at one time. One can imagine the sincere family worship period which followed the safe landing of all the party and their goods. Travelers who crossed the Niagara later than these first members were taken over on flat-bottomed boats. The tread mill was used for power to propel this means of water travel. As time passed by these first means of crossing the Niagara gave way to Ferry Steam boats, and still later, to modern bridges.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE CANADIAN DISTRICTS

**BERTIE DISTRICT.** The Canadian Church had a gradual development from its beginning. The Bertie District has remained the strongest in membership through the years. One reason given for the growth of the work is the stress placed on the necessity of each individual to have peace with God and peace with his fellowmen. When members were received into the Church, the ministers would always inquire in these words: "Have you found peace?" The emphasis placed on finding peace brought conviction to the unsaved and the result was many conversions. The unity which the Bertie District enjoyed for many years was largely due to taking only members who had really found peace. The Brethren claimed that hearts must first have unity within before unity of the spirit can be kept in the congregation.

This spirit of unity was manifested in the building of the Bertie Church in 1875. Time and means were not spared to have a substantial, commodious structure. Abram Winger donated the land and the deed is written so the land is to return to the heirs, providing it is no longer used by the Church in Canada. The large audience room without a post to hinder was made possible by a most efficiently built trestle-work. When this building is torn down, a large amount of lumber will be found in the roof and ceiling construction.

In 1911 the basement and audience room were both enlarged by adding wings to the original building. As it now

stands, the floor plan forms a cross. The audience room forms the main part of the cross, with the side rooms forming the extensions. The Brethren did not think of this when adding to the building, but nevertheless, they have a cross similar to the plans used in building the great cathedrals. In terms of cathedrals the old part towards the entrance, or the main part, is the nave and the front of the Church with the wings, is the transept. The rooms on the back of the church form the top of the cross. The word, nave, as applied here is so called from the resemblance of the nave in a cathedral to the inverted hull of a vessel. May this cross effect ever remind the worshippers of the cross on which Christ died for them. And may the thought of the nave remind them of the Gospel ship in which all can sail if they find the peace which the early members of this congregation so strongly stressed.

The ministers of this Stevensville Church since 1912 have been holding services a few miles distant at a point called Sherston. Services at this place of worship near Lake Erie have been conducted to accommodate a few families who found it difficult to attend the Stevensville Church services. The two congregations worship more or less as one on all special occasions.

The leadership of the Bertie Churches remained in the hands of the Wingers for many years. The Winger Overseers were in this order. John, or Hans Winger, the first minister in Canada, followed by Peter Winger, Abram Winger, and Jonas Winger. The house referred to above with plank used in the structure is the old Peter Winger homestead. The old Abram Winger home has been torn down. A bonnet, worn by Peter Winger's wife, and a cane and powder horn used by Abram Winger can be seen at Grantham. Other early leaders

who served in the ministry were Martin Climenhaga and Abram Zimmerman. Martin Climenhaga on a number of occasions preached barefooted without the audience in any way feeling he was out of order. Brother Zimmerman had great difficulty to speak English without making many mistakes. He seldom preached without warning the members to beware of the danger of education. Early leaders serving as deacons were David W. Climenhaga and Daniel Fretz.

A recent development in this District is the locating of the Ontario School not far from the home of Brother Zimmerman, who always warned against education. The Canadian Church purchased the Bellemont Club House at the river for school purposes. This splendid location is a credit to the wisdom of those who made the choice. The Bertie part of the Brethren in Christ have remained River Brethren from the standpoint of location. The location of the school is beautiful for situation and promising for future development.

The Church work at Clarence Center in New York State is at present under the Bertie District. This work started in 1826, when a few families moved there from York and Dauphin Counties, Pennsylvania. These early members settled on farms near the village of Clarence Center. For a number of years the worship was conducted in the community schoolhouse. Some of the names of the group which still live in the minds of older members are Anthony and Peter Rhodes, John Eshelman, John Windnagle, and Thomas Lewis. This section ceased to be a separate district after the death of their first Overseer, Peter Rhodes. Brother Rhodes was born in 1818, was made Overseer in 1872, died in 1901, and was laid to rest in the Clarence Center cemetery. He possessed a kind disposition, yet firm on the doctrines of the Church which he



served and appreciated. He was an active worker, and was always faithful in taking care of his duties.

Anthony Rhodes, Henry Rhodes, and Daniel V. Heise labored with him in the Gospel. Daniel V. Heise gave almost fifty years of service to the Church at this place. He and his loving wife were known for many miles around and were always on hand to help in the work. Having prospered financially and spiritually, they decided to give at their death much of their means to foreign mission work of the Church. When they were quite old they turned over to the missionary treasurer their private securities so they would be in the hands of the Church at their death. Many sons and daughters of different faiths look back to the white Church built in 1877. Hearts are warmed when they think of the sincerity and faithfulness of these early worshipers.

**WAINFLEET DISTRICT.** The sister of the first minister, John Winger, married a Sider before going to Canada with her brother. From this Sider family came the members of the Church who carried the faith West of Bertie about twenty miles. The Church building in this Wainfleet District was built in 1881. Henry Wills donated the land for the building which is along the Forks Road. This land was thickly timbered when these first settlers moved from near Stevensville, Ontario. The first members were Christian Sider and wife, and Barbara Smith. Brother Sider's loyalty to the Church is evident from the fact that his family of ten children all united with the Church of their father's choice. Christian's brother, Moses, was a faithful coworker in the ministry. Christian was the founder and Moses the faithful helper. They might well be called the Paul and Barnabas of the work at Wainfleet. Another faithful helper was Andrew Hensler, who served both

at Pelham and Wainfleet as early as 1840. The work at Pelham being so near Wainfleet makes it almost necessary to consider the two places as one work. The members worshipped together on many occasions.

Later the burden of the work in this district fell on the shoulders of Christian John Sider, the son of the first minister. It was during his life that the district was formed and he became the first Overseer. Up until this time the work was a part of the Bertie District. Christian Sider was noted for visiting the sick and for filling outside preaching appointments. His labor on these lines helped a great deal to build up the work. He was the first deacon. He held this office until he became a minister. The old homestead of this first Overseer is one of the landmarks of the community. This long, low-built house of brick dates back to the early form of architecture used by early German settlers in America. The rooms of the house were well adapted for worship services. These first members at Wainfleet were known for their sincerity, frugality, and faithfulness. Their sons and daughters rose up and called them blessed.

The other congregations belonging to this District are Cheapside, Springvale, and Boyle. The Springvale work dates back to about the same time as the development at Pelham, or a little earlier, the place referred to in connection with Wainfleet. The Pelham work has shifted to Boyle where a new interest strengthened the work. The work at Cheapside continued through the faithfulness of a few members for a period of years. In more recent years an improved place of worship has been provided, and under closer leadership, the congregation has increased. At Springvale a worthy work has been carried on under periods of encouragement and

periods of discouragement. This place will be remembered for being the first place that the Ontario School was conducted, and for the religious services held on the Indian reserve. The Church building at Pelham was erected in 1899, and repaired in 1914, and moved to Boyle in 1927. In 1928 this Church was rededicated as a place of worship at Boyle. The Church building at Cheapside was purchased from the United Church, and was moved from near Hagersville. This building was dedicated in 1929. The first Church building at Springvale was purchased in 1874 by Abram Winger, one of the most dramatic preachers of the Canadian Church. The present Church building was constructed in 1904 and dedicated in October of the same year.

Before the Mission Board took over the work at Houghton, Ontario, a small group for many years were cared for by ministers from Springvale and from Bertie. One brother and his wife for a number of years drove their horse twelve miles each way to bring the ministers from the railroad station to the services and back again. Through revival efforts and the mission activities, there has been a marked development in recent years. A few miles from Tillsonburg there are two Churches and several other places where services are held. The seed which was sown for many years has now blossomed into new growth. The places of worship are reported as Walsingham, Guysboro, and Frogmore.

**MARKHAM DISTRICT.** The Brethren in Christ Church developed north of Toronto, not far from Richmond Hill, soon after the work started in Bertie. This is a splendid farming country, and this attracted the early settlers from Pennsylvania. The background of these first members can be

traced to Europe. They came to Pennsylvania, and from this state moved to Canada. The first members came from Lancaster County, and some who became members early in Canada came from Somerset County. The first task in this new land was to clear away the heavy timbers to provide farming land. The farming was done with oxen, the grain cut with sickles, and the threshing done with flails.

Family names dating back to the first members are Heise, Steckley, and Doner. The Cobers came from Somerset County, Pennsylvania, and evidently joined the Brethren early in the history of the Markham Church. Christian Steckley was the first minister and Overseer. It appears he was ordained to the ministry in Pennsylvania, and came to Canada soon after 1800. In 1808 the work was organized by Jacob Engle, of Pennsylvania. John Doner, who came from Pennsylvania about 1807, was made Overseer in 1820. Peter Cober was given oversight in 1840 and he was followed by Samuel Snider, and in 1882, by Samuel Baker. Other early ministers were Christian Steckley, Jr., Samuel Doner, John Eyer, and Christian Hoover. Among the more recent ministers was Fred Elliott, who was ordained by Levi Lukenbach in 1883. Brother Elliott was not only an outstanding minister, but was also a poet. Space will not permit to give a full account of the early ministry of this district. The graves of these fathers can be found in the Heise Hill Cemetery at the Gormley Church.

Much credit is due the Deacon brethren for the success of the work in this district. The first four deacons were of the Heise family and through the years, four more of the same family tree served in this office. The Heise home near the Gormley Church is an historic landmark. It is believed that



the first love feast of this congregation was held at the home of John Heise, (Heise Hill). This house is still in the family and has been in the Heise family for six generations in succession. This clan deserves their share of the credit for the development of the Church work. July 28th, 1860, David W. Heise was born on Heise Hill. He had a double birthday each July from 1900 to his death. He was twice born, and his second birth was July 28th, 1900. For a time he followed the building trade, later the mercantile business, and then settled down to a more quiet life. He served the Church in various capacities as minister, conference worker, and mission board worker.

The ministers of Markham District preached at other points as well as at the Gormley Church. One point served for a period of time was Vaughn. Some of the most conservative members of the Church lived near this last mentioned place of worship. One family as late as 1905 would not use any paint, as they felt that its use appealed to one's pride. The woodwork and even the walks were kept spotlessly clean by continuous scrubbing. Some of these members had their background in the Old Order Dunker Church, and this accounts for some of the conservatism. One brother, about 1905, drove his open buggy to Toronto. His broad rimmed hat, cape overcoat, and flowing beard caused crowds to stand along the streets and at windows to see this saint of God pass down the street of this large city.

The Church was built in 1877 in the township of Markham, in the county of York, near the village of Gormley. Here, as elsewhere, the love feasts were held in barns and the regular services in the homes before the Church was built. The practice of holding Harvest Home meetings, as in some parts of



the Brotherhood, never was started in this district. Until the time the Church was built, tables were used at the Communion services. At prayer meeting the members remained seated to testify until it was decided at a council meeting that it would not be wrong to stand to testify.

Before the Church was built, revivals were held in private homes. No special efforts were made to this end, but seemingly of themselves, waves of conviction would sweep over the community. The regular preaching of God's Word and the lives of the members helped the unsaved to see the need of living for Christ. When conviction came, the Brethren would have more meetings than those regularly held. The Church would gather three or four nights a week for a period of weeks, not to try to get folks saved, but to give those an opportunity who were under conviction to make their desires known that they wanted to follow Christ and fellowship with His people. What an example to this generation is this method of revival, when the Church is at the place that the unsaved seek admittance instead of being coaxed to seek the Lord.

One example of the conversions in those days will conclude our account of this district. This account was written out by Henry R. Heise, who was ordained to the ministry in 1889 by Jesse Engle, our missionary to Africa. This was the experience of Brother Heise's grandfather's second wife. Mother Heise was reared in a family that spent their time in unrighteous living. She was nineteen years of age before she knew there was a God. At this age while horse back riding she was thrown from the horse and one foot remained in the stirrup which caused her to be dragged on the ground in this position. A Christian told her that it was only through the mercies of God that her life was spared. As she had never heard of God,

she inquired what was meant by this statement. This gave an opportunity to point the young woman to Jesus. When she heard of Jesus she desired to obey and follow Him. Soon she had a vision of two bodies of professed followers of Jesus. The one body was plain in dress and rather small in number. She had not met the Brethren, but after this vision she found the Church of her choice. She opened her Bible and while not having been able to read before, she found she could read the Bible. She read about baptism and then asked if the Brethren in Christ would baptize her. This took place soon after the Church was organized in Markham about 1815.

For the history of Ontario School while located in this district, see chapter eight.

NOTTAWA DISTRICT. Traveling north from Markham District less than ninety miles, one comes to the Nottawa District near the Georgian Bay. The origin of the Church in this part came about in this way. Conrad Swalm and Mary Swalm came to Nottawasaga in the year 1834 from Germany. It took about sixteen weeks to cross the ocean and before reaching their final place of settlement in Ontario, they walked thirty-four miles. For this distance of thirty-four miles the father carried a boy six years old, a bundle of clothing and provisions, and the mother carried a boy two years old on her back, and a bundle of clothing. Part of the distance they waded through nearly two feet of snow.

Before coming to America, Brother and Sister Swalm were members of the Lutheran Church in Germany. The mother was a faithful reader of the Word of God and one day, after settling in their home in North America, and while reading the tenth chapter of Acts she, like Cornelius, realized her

spiritual condition. She fasted one day at a time as opportunity afforded, as she did not want her husband to know it, and she did this for three days. Towards the evening of the third day she had a vision. She had heard of the Brethren in Markham, but never saw any of them. In her vision a voice said to her that she should go to those people who wear long hair and beards. After some anxious waiting the time came when she and her husband walked to Markham, a distance of eighty miles. It took them two days to make the journey. She told the Brethren at Markham how the Lord had forgiven her sins, and all about the vision. Some time later the Markham Brethren came to Nottawasaga and baptized the husband and wife. They were the first members baptized by the Brethren in Christ in this part of Canada.

According to an account from the Markham District, the work at Nottawa had developed into regular services by the middle of the nineteenth century or earlier. Brother H. R. Heise, of Gormley, gave the following account:

I was told by the late David Climenhaga of Stevensville, that grandfather Heise, a deacon in the Markham district and Peter Cober the Overseer of the district were active in Church work about the middle of the last century. Every spring and fall they made a tour of the four districts, Clarence Center, New York; Bertie, Ontario; Waterloo, Ontario, and Nottawa, Ontario. They would visit the members and as many other people as possible. This circuit was continued for a period of at least thirty years. The trips were made in a one-horse vehicle with wooden springs and a frame covered canvas top. No money was accepted in payment for these trips but instead these brethren labored during the winter so they would have means to take these trips during the summer. The complete trip was a distance of between five hundred and six hundred miles.

The early history of this section of country at Nottawasaga as given by an early settler is of interest. The early settlers came in 1834, some from Ireland, some from Germany, and

some from the Island of Islay, Scotland. The Government gave five acres of land to each person over twenty years of age. Conrad Swalm was one of the first settlers. The houses were built of logs which were cut and carried together by hand. Logs were split, and scooped out like a trough, for the roof. The first row of roof logs was laid with curved sides down and the top row was laid with the curved sides up. By laying the top row over the cracks of the lower row a watertight roof was the result. For a door, a thin split slab was used and hung with wooden hinges. Thin split slabs were used for windows and for flooring. The fireplaces were built of stone and mud, and sticks were used for the chimney. The first wheat was planted by hand with the use of a hoe. Heavy home made boots protected their feet. The first barns were log with basswood trough roofs as explained above. The first schoolhouses were log, with basswood troughs for roofs, split logs for seats, split slabs for doors, and a fireplace in one corner. The first school teacher boarded with the children's parents and received one week's board for each child in school.

Among the early members in this District, besides Conrad and Mary Swalm of Bowmore, Ontario, now Duntroon, there were the following: John and Christine Long, Charles and Elizabeth Ditson, and John and Barbara Baker. The Longs, Ditsons, and Bakers moved from Markham. The Longs and Ditsons came originally from Germany about 1865. Samuel Doner also moved to this section from Markham. Brother Doner was a minister in the Markham District and continued in this office at Nottawa. John Baker was the first minister in this part and for a time had general charge under the direction of the Markham District. For a number of years Markham and Nottawa were under one Overseer with Samuel



Baker, of Markham, having the oversight. The first Overseer of Nottawa after it became a separate district was Charles Baker.

Brother Baker was an able German scholar. For a period of years the work prospered under his supervision. He held to the teachings of the early fathers of the Brotherhood. His conversion was so real and meant so much to him that it was difficult for him to conceive of any further work of grace after conversion. The next Overseer after Charles Baker was Isaac Swalm, a father much beloved.

John Baker deserves much credit for pioneer work in this section. It was in 1856 that he came from Markham to Nottawa. He first served as deacon and later as a minister. John Ziegel, who came from Germany, was the second deacon. Christian Baker donated land for a Church, and in 1875 a building was erected on the sixth line of Nottawasaga Township. In 1902 a Church was built on the second line. Over a period of years services were held at different points, but at present the permanent services are held at the Sixth Line Church, the Second Line Church, and in Collingwood. The work in Collingwood was started through the efforts of Ernest Ditson.

The breeze from the large and beautiful Bay aided in giving these members in this country physical vigor, and their firm faith in Christ gave them spiritual strength. Sons and daughters born to these fathers and mothers spread far and wide. Some of these children strayed from the faith of their parents and have been lost in the masses. Much of the teaching fell on fertile soil and through the faithfulness of the new generations the work of the Church has been perpetuated.



This community has been greatly enriched and pointed to Christ by these faithful followers of the Master.

**WATERLOO DISTRICT.** The once flourishing District known as Waterloo has gradually been reduced to two Church groups. The one place of worship is Rosebank, not far from the city of Kitchener, and the other is Maple Grove, not far from Fordwich. This beautiful section of country proved more prosperous financially than spiritually, for some of the early settlers. The rolling landscape stocked with herds of cattle remains in the mind of the traveler through these parts. At one time a group of the Brethren in Christ Church several hundred strong toiled, labored, and worshipped in these parts. Being slow to start Sunday Schools, holding rigidly to the customs without adjustments, and standing firmly for definite personal experience of forgiveness for sins, all had the effect of not holding the rising generation.

In 1920 this scene was witnessed on one of the old homesteads. The grandfather lived in the old house. The house was plain and simple. This old brother wore plain clothes and drove a gentle horse hitched to a modest vehicle. A married member of his family lived in a house in another part of the yard. This son and wife joined a Church of another faith. They were good citizens and respectable Church members in the denomination they joined. The grandchildren were socially inclined and lived rather a modern life which included smoking cigarettes. The grandchildren were a great contrast to the old grandfather who was true to his faith and customs unto death.

The first minister of the Waterloo District was Abraham Witmer. He was placed in this office early in the nineteenth

century. Co-laborers with him in the work were George Shupe, Peter Holm, David Witmer, Niel P. Holm, David Gingrich, Ben Shupe, and Wendell Hallman. The work was organized into a District in 1833, with George Shupe as first Overseer. Those following in this office were Ben Shupe, John Wilfong, and John Reichard. The first Overseer's grave is in the Mennonite cemetery in Blenheim, near New Dundee. The first minister was buried in the Gingrich cemetery and later his body was moved to Mt. Wanner cemetery at Preston. The first Deacon was David Gingrich who received this office soon after 1800. His body was also moved from the Gingrich cemetery to Mt. Wanner cemetery.

Abraham Witmer came from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. George Shupe and David Gingrich both came from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in 1801. Some of the members came from Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, in 1804. Only eternity will reveal the far reaching effect for good of the lives of these who so nobly stood for the faith delivered unto them. The few who remain are still faithful to the trust they received.

The history of Waterloo Township, written by Ezra Eby and published in Berlin (now Kitchener) in 1896 gives some interesting touches of some of these early members. Of Benjamin Shupe it is stated that "his preaching is plain and practical and his sermons are always worded that even the most unlearned cannot fail to grasp the idea he wishes to convey to his hearers." Niehls P. Holm was born in Copenhagen, Denmark, October 19, 1774. "He was a sailor in his younger days, and when Admiral Parker assisted by Nelson bombarded in 1801 young Holm was present and had a very narrow escape of his life." He, with others, struck for the open sea

and followed a piratical life for a few years. This did not appeal to him, so he escaped at an American port. He later moved to near Hespler where he and his wife reared their family of ten children. Peter Niles, a minister, lived near Hespler. It is stated of him that he died without an enemy. Of Benjamin D. Hallman, a minister, it is stated that "as regards firmness of will and strict self-denial" he stands unrivalled. "Active, faithful, disinterested, and self-sacrificing devotion to the teaching of that which he regards as truth and gospel teachings are marked features of his character. His natural good sense and sound judgment made him one of the ablest divines of the Church of his choice." Of Wendell Hallman, another minister, it is stated: "As a minister he is well liked by his congregation and others. His sermons are distinguished for the great amount of well digested thoughts so vividly expressed in the plainest language, that no one hearing him preach can say, 'I did not understand him,' for all who wished to be taught out of the Word of God will say, 'Mr. Hallman's sermons are always Gospel-like and soul-cheering.'"

SASKATCHEWAN DISTRICT. Going to the far North to Saskatchewan, Canada, we find a number of members of the Church. This work is the result of members moving from different parts of the Brotherhood, mainly from Ontario, to settle on new homesteads. The Canadian government granted a free homestead to any qualified settler for ten dollars per one hundred and sixty acres, providing one would live on the homestead, and do the required duties, such as breaking or ploughing the land. Not less than ten acres per year were to be ploughed until thirty acres in all were broken. It was required that the homesteader live at least six months each year

on the farm for three years before he could obtain title to the land. Should a son living with his parents on another homestead desire to fill the requirements for a section of land the Government allowed this, but substituted the breaking of more land, or the building of fences, instead of living the six months per year on the section. Due to this offer of the Government, families moved from Nottawa, Ontario; Stevensville, Ontario; Markham, Ontario; Buffalo, New York; Greencastle, Pennsylvania; Bethel, Kansas, and from other points. The purpose of settling in the Northwest was two-fold, as stated by one of the settlers: "To take advantage of the reasonable offer of the Government, and to cause this part of God's earth to shine for Him." This prairie country is like a sea of land. Some of the sections, consisting of over six hundred acres, were first seeded to flax. This flax in bloom looked like a blue lake surrounded by prairie grass and wheat. After a crop of flax, wheat was generally sown. Thousands upon thousands of acres were covered with this golden grain.

Some of the early brethren to this country hauled their belongings on sort of stone boat made of two heavy pieces of wood fastened together with boards. Early settlers in Manitoba not of this faith made two wooden wheels, joined by a wooden axle and a platform on which to ride. The platform was balanced by a small wheel. This conveyance was propelled by two men turning a double handle crank which was geared to the large wheels. This was an exceedingly slow way to travel, but an effort to work out a method adapted to the times. Heavy wagons were mostly used by the brethren at first. These wagons served for hauling, travel, and for going to the place of worship.

Many of the first houses were either of sod or were a small

wooden shack. The heavy prairie sods piled one upon another made a warm shelter. The side walls of the sod homes on the inside were sometimes covered with heavy brown paper. In many cases the roofs were covered with sod instead of shingles.

Early in the development of the work a Church was built not far from Kindersley, under the leadership of Isaac C. Baker, formerly of Nottawa, Ontario. The work was destined to an early rupture which resulted in Brother Baker and his followers leaving the fellowship of the group. His reasons for separation are set forth in a fifty-two page booklet, entitled, *Misrepresentation and Error Exposed*. Brother Baker felt that he was not given a fair hearing. The trouble arose concerning the teaching of sanctification as a definite work of grace. An election was held for an Overseer the summer of 1911 and the lot fell on Brother Baker. Difficulty developed concerning his ordination when Brother Baker would not fully consent to the following question asked him at the council of the local Church: "Will you be in favor of any minister or evangelist in good standing with General Conference, to come and labor with the congregation here, provided he is desired by a majority of the members; and will you promise not to refute his teaching either at the time of his presence or afterwards?"

Finally adjustments were made and Brother Baker was ordained. The division came in 1913 during an effort to hold a revival among themselves. Brother Baker was blamed for not conducting the service as it should be. A council was called and the result was a division of the group. About one-third stayed with Brother Baker and the rest, or the West end of the District started a service of their own. The Church building



was on the land owned by Brother Baker, so his group retained it in which to hold their services. At a later date Brother Baker and his followers united with the Church of the Brethren. He felt that the difficulty arose from the fact that he held firmly and conscientiously to the teaching of the Church and the doctrine of sanctification as he had received it from the early fathers.

In 1916 the Brethren of the West end of the original District built a Church, known as Clear View Church. Fred C. Hahn, a young minister, and one who was active in the discussions during the division, became the Overseer. Brother Hahn did not remain long with the Church and finally left the community to enter a more independent type of Christian service in the form of City Mission work. From that time to the present the main responsibility for the welfare of the cause has rested on the ministers and deacons.

From the early history of the work in Saskatchewan some brethren have conducted services near Delisle. Reuben S. Climenhaga has served as minister and Abram Winger as a faithful helper from the beginning. This group has always co-operated fully with the Brethren at Kindersley. From this point the work in the form of mission activity has spread still farther north to Paddockwood, and several nearby points. Well named is the one place, North Star Mission, at Meath Park.

The Canadian Church as a whole has zealously stood through the years for the teaching of the Word as taught by the fathers. Two points which they have been especially faithful in upholding are freedom from politics and non-resistance. They are loyal to the Government under which

they live, but do not believe in voting nor running for provincial nor Dominion offices. One minister did participate to the extent that he reached a seat in the Parliament at Ottawa, but at the expense of losing his office in the Church. Many religious bodies would be proud to have a member reach such a position in the Government, but this was not true of the Brethren in Christ of Canada. The members, while averse to politics and the bearing of arms, are not opposed to helping suffering humanity even if a war has caused the distress. During the world war of 1914 to 1919, the Brethren joined with the Mennonites in making an earnest appeal to every member for a generous financial contribution for suffering humanity. This same spirit of helpfulness was shown in 1940.

## CHAPTER VII

### UNITED ZION'S CHILDREN AND OLD ORDER RIVER BRETHREN

The Brethren in Christ Church did not become a large organization and was made smaller on two occasions. The first division was in 1843 when a number of the Brethren withdrew from the main body and decided to hold separate services. No Church buildings were involved in the separation, as only houses and barns were used for worship. The other division was in 1852, when trouble arose over the building of a place of worship, under the leadership of one of the ministers. The issue gradually grew larger and in 1855 a separate organization was formed. The body of believers, formerly one, now divided into three, resulted in three Churches standing for practically the same doctrines. Through the years, by not working together, slight differences have arisen, but even to 1940 these changes are only minor. Small differences are often magnified as was the case when the two branches divided from the original Church.

**OLD ORDER.** The members who separated in 1843 never grew beyond five hundred in number. In this division it was the more conservative element which withdrew from the main body. The leaders of those who withdrew placed the blame for the division on worldliness in the Church. Church divisions have often been the result of personal ambition on the part of leaders, and there is no proof that in this case there

was complete freedom from this. Slight changes were taking place in dress, means of conveyance, and in home comforts. Until this day, some of this group have refused such modern conveniences as telephones, radios, and automobiles. The exact reason for this division may never be known beyond the fact that a disagreement arose, and enough were finally affected by it to form a new and separate group of worshipers. The famous Newman said that people look the same on the outside, but that great changes unseen take place within the heart. Outward things are usually blamed for divisions, but the truth, if revealed, would in many cases be feelings in the heart.

Some of those who withdrew lived in York County, Pennsylvania. As the original Church had no chosen name at the time of the division, no thought was given concerning a name by those who separated. The original Brethren were called River Brethren by others. Those who went to Canada were called by others, Tunkers. No group of people can associate together without being named, when they choose no name for themselves. Some association will be made, and in this case the name of the County was used and they became known as Yorkers, or Yorker Brethren. In reality, they were Old Order River Brethren, or, as some called them, Old Order Brethren. The majority of these Brethren have always lived in Pennsylvania. A few reached Ohio, some reached Iowa and Indiana, and one member of the original Church in Canada joined the Old Order.

The Yorkers in Pennsylvania live mostly in Lancaster County and Franklin County, with a few in York County. Those in Ohio live in the vicinity of the city of Canton, and the one in Canada lived near Stevensville, Ontario. There

were five members in Indiana in 1906, but the location of them has not been learned. The Yorkers in Iowa live west of the city of Des Moines and in the vicinity of Dallas Center.

Names familiar in Franklin County, one of the strongest wings of the Church, are Hawbecker, Myers, Shank, and Nicewander. Brother Dan Hawbecker was the Overseer for a number of years. This fine Christian gentleman was an example of the graces mentioned in the Bible as belonging to the children of God. He was interested in the welfare of the Church and spent time and effort to care for the work. Brother Hawbecker did not know much of the early history of the Church, nor of the River Brethren from whom they separated. He was pleased to learn all he could about the past, but his opportunity to do so was somewhat limited.

These people have never built Churches, but continue to use their houses and barns as places of worship. Their homes have remained simple and free from touches of art and music. Many of the men have continued the wearing of broad rimmed hats, cape overcoats, and rather heavy foot wear. The sisters wear heavy gathered skirts, capes, and heavy white prayer-veilings. In many cases the young people continue the custom of not joining the Church until after marriage, as was done among the River Brethren in their early history. In this way the religious garb worn by the members was not disgraced by the youth. This Church still follows the former custom of the River Brethren in not having Sunday Schools, young people's meetings, and city or foreign mission work. Practically all of the members are rural people, which accounts for not having any worship in towns or cities. Education above the grade schools is discouraged on account of the



danger, as they feel, of leading away from the simplicity of the faith.

A visit to one of their religious services gives not only a picture of how they worship at present, but as well, how the River Brethren formerly worshipped. At this service the large farm house is crowded with both young and old, the majority, however, being older people. The seats consist of chairs, benches, and supported boards. The ministers sit in a group in one corner of a room. The service consists of slow, drawn-out hymns, solemn prayers while kneeling, testimonies of trials, joys, and hope in Christ, and explanation of the Scriptures by the ministers. The ministers often speak in a somewhat musical tone and generally in a high pitch. On love feast occasions, held in the barns, long tables are arranged, at which the people eat. The meal is prefaced with singing, "Father we thank Thee for this food, but more we thank Thee for the Lord."

These fathers were men of conviction and that which they believed was right, they sought to follow. After separating from the River Brethren, some of them would not even allow a member of the original Church to pray in their homes, nor in their services. Formalism is just as dangerous as fanaticism, and this has had a telling effect on the work of this body. Powwowing, as practiced among the North American Indians, was at times used to perform cures for diseases, but such old customs can be freely overlooked when one thinks of the many noble qualities these people possessed. For honesty, frugality, and sincere religious worship, these people have not been surpassed. While they do not participate in politics of the State and Nation, and do not believe in war, they are loyal citizens, and make no trouble for the government. How

much better the world would be if there were more of these God-fearing, truth-loving, and faithful worshipers on the earth. They believed, as Newman said in his Discourses to Mixed Congregations: "We are not sent into this world for nothing; we are not born at random; we are not here that we may go to bed at night, and get up in the morning, toil for our bread, eat and drink, laugh and joke, sin when we have a mind, and reform when we are tired of sinning." To these people life has a purpose and this world is not the end of life.

UNITED ZION'S CHILDREN. The division of 1855 resulted in a group of Christians who chose a name for themselves, rather than to continue to use the name, River Brethren. Many of the River Brethren called them Brinserites, but the chosen name is United Zion's Children. This Church has never developed outside of Dauphin, Lebanon, and Lancaster Counties, Pennsylvania. At one time there were a few members in Franklin County, and a few west of the Appalachian mountains not far from Altoona. The work started in Dauphin County and spread to the other two counties mentioned. The development was due to revivals being held in various parts of these counties. The Church reached about the same size as the Canadian wing of the Brethren in Christ.

The reason they were called Brinserites by some is due to their leader and founder, Matthias Brinser, who was born May 10th, 1795, in Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, and died July 27th, 1889, aged 94 years, two months and seventeen days. The grave and well-preserved mark can be seen on the old Brinser homestead below Middletown. When driving on the State Highway from Harrisburg to Lancaster City via Middletown, leave the highway on the improved road to the right just before you reach the Swatara United Zion's Chil-

dren Church on the left. You will pass a schoolhouse on the left and will come to Geyer's United Brethren in Christ Church, the burial place of Solomon H. Brinser, the son of Matthias Brinser. At this Church, turn toward the Pennsylvania Railroad and proceed through the arch under the Railroad to the crossroad. Between the railroad and the crossroad on the right-hand side is the location of the first Church building of the United Zion's Children. Just a short distance farther on the same road is the Hillsdale United Zion's Children Church, which was built when the first Church was torn down in 1893 on account of the change in the Railroad track to remove a curve. In 1940 this Hillsdale Church was turned into a dwelling house. Returning now from the former Hillsdale Church, go through the arch and turn to your right on a narrow dirt road until you come to the parting of the road. At this point turn left past the Old Brinser home to a lane to your left and a short distance up this lane will be found the small graveyard.

This Church, or meeting-house, as it was called, that Brinser and his followers built, was the last straw which caused the division which resulted in this separate body of believers. Brother Brinser was ordained to the ministry in 1829, and, at a later date, was made Overseer. He was one of the most used ministers in the River Brethren Church. He would often travel forty or fifty miles to officiate at funerals, or preach the Gospel. On one occasion, by request he preached in Harrisburg in the Dauphin County court-house. In his early days he was a school teacher, and taught in the long schoolhouse which stood on the homestead yard. His being greatly used did not add to his prestige among the officials of the Church, and it also had a tendency to make Brother Brinser feel a

sense of leadership beyond that appreciated by some. He and some of the Brethren, contrary to the wishes of some of the River Brethren, took the liberty to build a house of worship. Until this time the services were always held in the homes and barns of the members. To have a Church building seemed too progressive and not in keeping with the customs of the Brethren. Some encouraged the building and others discouraged it. Brother Brinser knew that any change by way of improvement is not always easily obtained by counseling and therefore took the liberty to proceed.

Before giving the decisions of the River Brethren, or Brethren in Christ, in the matter, some quotations from an account of this meeting-house by Professor H. S. Brinser, a grandson of Matthias Brinser, and a son of Solomon H. Brinser, will interest the reader:

As State Rights stood for Calhoun, so stood this house for our grandfather. It was not old, but deep interest clusters around its history. The house would hardly have been taken for a schoolhouse by a passing stranger, for it was far below the general appearance of that kind of building. Being in the corner of a field, hard by the public road, a stranger would have been apt to regard it as an implement shed. It stood where four roads met. Many noted personages were surprised on first seeking this meeting-house, remembering the offence it occasioned for its extravagance. Scarcely possible to believe, it was regarded as a sacrilegious innovation. Its builder, however, lived to see the day, when the Church from which he was excommunicated, adopted the very doctrines for which he fought so heroically. It must certainly have been a great satisfaction to this aged father in Israel. We are told that he once said: 'Sie fressen einmal was sie now kutzen.' (They will do some future day what they now refuse.) The prophecy was certainly fulfilled.

In a brief history of the United Zion's Children Church, published by them in an eight page pamphlet six inches by three and one-fourth inches, 1917, an account is given of the separation of the Church:



In February, 1853, a number of Brethren in Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, called a meeting to consider and to come to the conclusion concerning the building of a meeting-house, and as there were no objections made, they began to build a meeting-house in the neighborhood of Matthias Brinser. The Brethren in Lancaster County held a council with Jacob Engle, where the conclusion was reached, to warn them not to build the house. They wrote their conclusion in the German language in the following words and sent it to Matthias Brinser.

Conoy Township, Lancaster County, May 16, 1853. Beloved Brethren: We wish you the peace of God and the love of Jesus Christ, with heart-felt greeting, we the undersigned brethren have held a council, concerning the contemplation of building a meeting-house in your neighborhood, and have unanimously concluded to ask of you that you shall not build it, as such a building we believe would become an open door to a great evil, and would make heavy hearts for many brethren; therefore we request of you, out of heart-felt love, that you will accept our counsel (6).

This note was signed by twenty-seven brethren. The family names of the signers are: one Strickler, Martin, Creider, Lehman, Stoner, Grove, Graybill, Ginder, Herschey, Hoffer, two Gishes, Hostetters, Hoffmans, three Mussers, and eight Engles.

Sometime in the summer of 1855 they held another council with John B. Engle, in Conoy Township, and expelled Matthias Brinser and all his followers, from the Church, on this wise: This notice or letter shows you, Matthias Brinser, that a unanimous conclusion has been reached, that the council, which was held at Jacob Engle's will be carried out with you. It says: 'If he neglect to hear the Church let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican' and you have not heard, therefore, you can no longer be a brother, until you become conscious of the wrong and the fellowship will cease that exists with those that believe as you do; and it was seen, that the Church failed, inasmuch as it did not carry out the council in the beginning, when you did not hear.

An interesting account is given concerning this meeting-house by Professor H. S. Brinser. The writer of this account attended the services at this meeting-house when a lad. He



remembers his grandfather, Matthias Brinser, and traveled over the historic country road from the old Brinser homestead to the little brown Church. Here are his own words:

The building was plastered and contained two old-fashioned stoves for heating purposes. There were five seating apartments. Four short benches were directly in front of the pulpit. On these benches sat the ones hard of hearing, and the only place that men and women sat in one tier. We can yet see the silver-haired brethren and sisters leaning forward to drink in the Gospel with long tin horns to one of their ears. There were also two large tiers of seats, one to the right and the other to the left of the pulpit, seating about two hundred. To the right sat the sisters, to the left the brethren. With the sisters were their little girls, generally clad plainly, and especially do we recall their little bonnets. With the brethren were their boys, and in their long pantaloons, longing for the time to come when they could sit on the boy's side. To the left, on the first bench, sat the preachers' and the deacons' wives and those who some day might expect such a position. On the next seat were those of the older and more active ones. So the seating shaded down to the last seat where were the younger sisters and those who were not yet sisters, but desired some day so to be. The scene will never be forgotten, that little sea of similarity, bonnets, capes and caps.

The very same shading of seating held true on the left, the brethren's side. The brethren almost always came in the end door, known to the boys as the brother's door. Should a young man come in at this door it would make us smile. Then there were still two more tiers to the right and left of the side door. These sides were respectively the girl's side and the boy's side, seating the same number as the pulpit sides. Here again the shading was in bold relief. On the first seats those girls who now went to the girl's side and those who belonged to other churches. So it ranged from the plainer to the dressy and the more gaudy and sinners on the back seats. The boy's side was our coveted goal, where we could be as other boys. Here again we find the same manner of voluntary seating. The worst boys invariably on the back seat. The benches were made of pine boards, with backs, but were neither painted, varnished nor clothed. Many bore names carved and written of those who attended the services and left artistic monograms thereon. Promiscuous seating of men and women was not known in this house and when their children got out into the world they thought this something wonderful and little dreamed that some day they would do the same.

It was in this low and modest building that its founder preached his last sermon when he was nearly 94. It was still freighted with

his zest, and the same easy flow of language was still manifest. We do not know of a single service that he omitted in this house, save the last year or two of his life, when he may have missed a few. In this mecca he saw the revival becoming a feature of the Church, and a number of his grandchildren were here converted. It was the great baptizing place during the summer, and sometimes as many as twenty were immersed by triune immersion. How well do we recollect the almost painful quiet that reigned when the applicants rose for the baptismal questions. At such occasions frequently a dozen preachers were present. The services were well attended, even the aisles and the steps of the pulpit being filled. Hillsdale meeting was always a pleasant anticipation for old and young.

Hymn books were not used in the services. The hymns were lined out and sung, and when we did not have the words we sang the tune. Rev. Brinser generally waited until the other ministers had spoken and then he would 'cap the climax.' When others hesitated to speak he would say in Pennsylvania dutch, 'Brethren make the time go along, let the time not go by so lazily.'

The appearance of the highway on meeting day bore the semblance of divided funeral processions, for there was a stream of vehicles from all surrounding parts. After services those that came many miles stopped with the neighbors, partook of dinner and had their horses fed. This was a time when special preparation was made on the Brinser homestead, for it was a usual occurrence to feed from twenty to thirty horses and more than twice that number of persons. This was cheerfully done and the grandchildren always enjoyed big crowds. The persons were fed by father and son. Prayer and song were common before they parted.

This account from which we have quoted closes with four lines in Pennsylvania Dutch. A free translation of these lines is: "Here came many people from near and far, to hear the Word and to praise the Lord. The old teachers are passed on, it is true, but the words they spoke ring ever still clear."

Your author visited two old brethren who were living when the division came on account of building the meeting-house. The one was Michael Musser who was in the council when the Brethren made their decision concerning Brother Brinser and his followers. Brother Musser said as a young man he sat in the council as a listener but did not take part. He seemed to

feel kindly toward the United Zion's Children. He did not put all the blame on them for the trouble which arose. This was a kind attitude for Brother Musser, a firm River Brethren, to take. The other old gentleman visited, when in his nineties, was Reverend Joseph Nissley, of Hummelstown. He, being full of years and mellowed through much experience, like Brother Musser, seemed void of undue censure, and did not lay the blame all on one side. While his feeling was kindly for all concerned, he seemed to feel that the cause of the separation of the two Churches lay primarily with those who met in Council and made the decisions. Those who caused the separation and those who suffered on account of it have all gone to their reward. The feeling on the part of many at present in both Churches is that we of this generation are not to blame for the past and that we ought both to work unitedly for the Master's cause.

Many opinions have been expressed through the years concerning the separation. In the appendix of this book, in the article by John K. Miller, the account is given by him. Jacob M. Martin, of Elizabethtown, told how some of the Brethren in Christ of Lancaster County felt when they saw the need for Church buildings and decided to build. Some thought it was wrong to build when Reverend Brinser and his followers were expelled for building a Church. Many confessions were made, jealousy was confessed, forgiveness was asked, and tears were shed. It looked as though a uniting of the Brinser followers and the main wing of the Church would take place. Some thought it best to wait a few months before making a final decision in the matter, and to this day the concluding agreement has not been reached.

A brief review of the first Church buildings will give a

clear picture of the situation. The vision of brother Brinser of a need for a regular place of worship came to the attention of the Church in 1853 when he called a meeting in Dauphin County to consider the building of a place of worship. He accepted the decision of this council to build. The trouble arose when the Brethren in Lancaster County called a council and objected to the Church being built. By 1855 this building was erected and it was seen that the Brethren in Dauphin County were not going to listen to the objections from Lancaster County. No other congregation decided to build until twelve years later. When Morrison Cove decided to build a Church, and did build, evidently no objection was made by any other county. This, of course, was a much greater distance from the main body of the Brethren in Lancaster County. When no difficulty arose in building the Woodbury Church in 1867, the Brethren decided to build another building at Martinsburg the following year. Then Franklin County took the privilege and building Churches spread throughout the whole brotherhood. Lancaster County waited until 1877 to build their first building and this was only a little over twenty years later than Brother Brinser and the Dauphin County Brethren decided to build. This separation remains to this day as one of the outstanding lessons to the Brethren in Christ to be more careful in handling changes which are certain to come as time continues.

The growth of the United Zion's Children is a credit to the founder and to those who worked with him in the spreading of the Gospel. Much of the development of the Church is the result of revival efforts. The Church has had some splendid evangelists who, without fear or favor, pointed the way to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world. There



was an outstanding revival at Hillsdale in 1857, and another one in 1869. About 1900 there was a great revival at Swatara Hill. The spirit of God worked mightily and a great many old and young people were saved. This revival spirit spread to other parts, and in 1870 a series of meetings were held in Lebanon County at the home of Henry O. Light. In 1880 forty were converted at a revival in the Jonestown meeting-house. The day on which these converts were baptized, almost five thousand people attended the baptismal service. Forty-six persons were converted at a revival in Lancaster County, held at Vogansville, in 1889. In 1914, another revival broke out in this same place, and in these services forty-four were saved. This small town was so completely shaken that the saloon-keeper himself admitted that he had lost his patrons.

These meetings, which resulted in the growth of the Church, were conducted with a great deal of enthusiasm and passion for souls. Some of the services were conducted in this manner. Much emphasis was put into the singing. A brother would start singing with all the volume he could produce. Others would follow until the whole congregation, as one voice, would be singing praises to God. Some would look up, clap their hands, and use their feet to beat time on the floor. An ordinary service seemed dead to these Brethren in Lancaster County. As soon as one brother was through with the song he started, another would start a song and then another, and another. In this spirit the service continued, including singing, testimony, prayer, and preaching.

After the sermon, a period of time was generally used in the altar, or after service. This part of the service would vary in length, depending on the spirit of the meeting. If



no one responded to the invitation to follow Christ, it would last about one-half hour. When hearts responded, it continued much longer. The time was used in singing and praying. After several songs, there would be a period of prayer, followed by more singing, then more praying, then more singing, and more praying. The seekers at the altar did their own praying and often with much demonstration. When the hour grew late, the service was dismissed with admonition to the seekers to keep on until they knew they were saved. Seekers would come to the altar night after night, until they had prayed through. Some would come every night for a number of weeks. It was customary to continue the revival meeting as long as there were seekers who had not received the witness. In these revivals, the seekers prayed until they received a personal witness for themselves. This resulted in glowing testimonies with much assurance. The preaching was mostly against sin and on the importance of receiving the witness. Many outstanding transformations resulted, both on the line of dress and living.

There are three districts in the Church, namely, Dauphin, Lebanon, and Lancaster. Dauphin is the mother District of the Church. This District ordained two ministers in 1856, one Daniel Kieffer, to serve in Dauphin County and the other, Christian Wenger, to serve in Lebanon County. The Dauphin District includes all of Dauphin County and the upper part of Lancaster County. Some of the first members, besides Brother and Sister Matthias Brinser, were Brother and Sister John C. Brinser, Sister Charles Shutter, Brother and Sister Jacob Brinser, and Brother and Sister John Farver. These were members who came from the Brethren in Christ Church and lived in or near Middletown, of which place they were origi-

nal inhabitants. The earliest record we have of these brethren is that services were held by the Brethren in Christ in the home of John Brinser, before 1820. After his death, his son, Matthias, lived on the old homestead and services were continued, although Matthias was yet unconverted. Later he, too, was saved, and the meeting-house was built. The first deacons of the District were Samuel Shoop and John Shenk. The third minister of the District was Martin Shearer, and following him the ministers were J. C. Brinser, Samuel Longenecker, Conrad Zigler, and Joseph Nissley.

After the death of their first leader, Matthias Brinser, Conrad Zigler took his place. The next leaders were Joseph Nissley, followed by S. H. Brinser. Brother Nissley was a man of keen intellect and strong will power. When he set himself to a task he was sure to get it accomplished. Besides these qualities which fitted him well for his office, he was a fluent speaker. He lived to be ninety-four years old, and almost to the time of his death, his physical and mental powers were remarkably preserved. S. H. Brinser took charge of the work several years before Brother Nissley died. He was a man of deep devotion and piety and he always manifested a grave concern for the welfare of the Church. His warm and genial nature endeared him to all who were under his care. Through his ministry the Church steadily grew and his home congregation at Elizabethtown was one of the most flourishing groups of worshipers.

The Church buildings in the District are Hillsdale, Kieffers, Shenks, Elizabethtown, and Swatara Hill. As the Hillsdale meeting-house was located so closely to the railroad, it was considered unsafe for continued use, on account of the horses becoming frightened by the trains. The building was torn

down in 1893 and a new one was built farther away from the railroad. The Elizabethtown Church was built in 1887, moved a short distance on a new foundation with a basement, in 1910, and another room attached at the same time. The new addition is at the rear end of the building and is used mostly for prayer meeting and Sunday School purposes. Before the Church was built at Elizabethtown, services were held in the United Brethren Church for a period of years. Both the Shenks and Swatara Hill Churches are union houses, used jointly by several denominations.

In Lebanon County the Church laid a good foundation for the future of the work by interesting such worthy families as the Heiseys, Nolls, Wengers, Martins, Snyders, Oberholtzers, Lights, and Firesteins, early in the development. All of these names are of original inhabitants in the County and some of these families left the River Brethren with Matthias Brinser. Some of the early deacons were Daniel B. Heisey, Isaac Struphar, Michael Uoftzer, Henry O. Light, Peter Ensminger, Aaron Grate, and A. C. White.

Daniel B. Heisey was a deacon in the River Brethren Church before the separation, and was later appointed as a minister in the United Zion's Children Church. Other early ministers were John B. Firestine, Jacob Wenger, C. U. White, John Ensminger, Christian Wenger, Jonas Hoak, Jacob Geirstand, and Daniel S. Wenger. Of the deacons, Henry O. Light was outstanding. He was "full of faith and the Holy Ghost;" he had considerable native ability and tact which made him a good disciplinarian. Of the ministers, J. B. Firestine was rather outstanding as an evangelist, and Christian Wenger as a faithful helper in Church work.

The first leader of this District was C. W. White. He was made Overseer the summer of 1880, and served in this capacity for thirty-six years. Brother White was a good leader and under his ministration the Church grew from a small body to a fairly large membership. He was a man of unusual zeal, was always prompt, and rarely missed a service. In his earlier days when hymn books were not used in the Church and many of the services were conducted in the Pennsylvania Dutch, his unusual supply of hymns and tunes in this dialect was a great blessing, and to the end of his life, they were an inspiration to himself and to his audience. His outstanding characteristic was kindness to the old and young, and while he did use sharpness when the occasion demanded it, yet he wielded his greatest power in love. In his sermons, his strongest admonitions were always accompanied with weeping.

The Heisey meeting-house was the first one built in this District. It was built soon after the separation from the River Brethren and was located one mile west of Annville. In 1890 this building was torn down and in its place a Church was built one mile directly north of Annville, and is now called the Annville meeting-house. The lot on which it was built was donated by a member of the United Brethren Church. It has been remodeled and also enlarged, the last improvements being made in 1912. The Jonestown meeting-house was built about 1872; the one at Palmyra in 1909, and the one at Millbach in 1912. The ground on which the Palmyra Church was built was donated by U. S. Kreider. The Fredericksburg Church was bought in 1910, and the Lebanon Church was built in 1916.

The first love feast in this District was held on the farm of John Oberholtzer, near Fredricksburg; the first Bible Confer-



ence was held in 1920, and the first missionary meeting was held about 1912. For a time, for reasons untold, the membership of the District was gradually growing smaller, but later a change came. Later, Annville alone had a membership of over one hundred, without Palmyra and Lebanon, which were formerly a part of the Annville congregation.

A few years after the Church was established in Dauphin and Lebanon counties, Jacob Pfautz began to hold preaching services in Lancaster County. Brother Pfautz was formerly a member of the Church of the Brethren, but in that he was not permitted to enter the ministry, as he felt the Lord led him, he left, and united with the United Zion's Children and was by them ordained to the ministry. Matthias Brinser's experience at the time Brother Pfautz made application for membership was rather peculiar and proved that the Lord was leading. The night before Brother Pfautz came to apply, Matthias Brinser saw in a dream an elderly grey-bearded man, coming toward his house. The man was in deep perplexity and soul trouble. The next morning Brother Pfautz came, and Brother Brinser at once recognized him as the man he had seen in his dream. After making his request known, Brother Pfautz was given the privilege to go back to his home and conduct regular preaching services. Soon a number were converted and among them were Joel Null and his brother and Henry Fry. From Hahnstown the center of these early activities, the work spread and other places of worship were opened.

Another of the early Church fathers, and doubtless the most influential one, was Henry Grumbine. It was after him that the Church was mostly, though improperly, called the "Grumbine" Church. Brother Grumbine had formerly belonged to the United Brethren Church in Lebanon County, but after



uniting with the United Zion's Children he moved to Lancaster County to engage actively in Church work. Before, his services were conducted in rather a formal way, and no revival meetings were held. Brother Grumbine possessed a live, old-time Methodist spirit and his burning messages created new interest in the work. He conducted his first revival services at Millport in 1872 and here, among the forty-eight converts, Brother Joe Martin was saved. One of the rules of Brother Grumbine's life was that when a member had missed a service three times in succession he paid him a visit to find out the cause of his absence. It was on his farm near Vogansville that the first love feast in the district was held. Early ministers in the district included Samuel Shimp, Amos Hunsicker, Joseph Martin, J. A. Heitler, Daniel Showalter, John Showalter, and some of those serving later were Elias Hornberger and Samuel Fasnacht. Some of the deacons were Henry Fry, John Fry, Oliver Showalter, John Showalter, and Henry Screiner.

For a number of years after the Church was established, Lancaster County had no Overseer of its own, but was under the oversight of those from the other districts. Finally, conference decided to have a leader at this place, and in 1910 Joseph Martin was ordained and served in this capacity eleven years. In his earlier years, Reverend Martin did a great deal of evangelistic work, for which he was thoroughly fitted. He was like a flame of fire wherever he went, and scores of souls were converted under his ministry. While he was a widely known and noted minister, yet, because of his boldness in exposing all forms of sin, he often brought upon himself the ridicule and hatred of evil men. But, like all those who labor in the power of the Spirit, he could say, "none

of these things move me.” He always taught plainly and clearly the doctrine of the new birth and sanctification, and no one could be under his teaching long and be in darkness as to his own spiritual condition. After his death, Reverend Elias Hornberger was ordained leader in 1922, after having served in the ministry for thirty-seven years.

The regularly appointed places of worship are: Hahnstown, Vogansville, Reinholds, Stevens, Rothsville, Oregon, Akron, Home Chapel, Martins, and for a time, Lancaster Mission. Preaching services had been held every three weeks at each of these places except at the Mission, where service were held every Sunday night. The meeting-houses at Vogansville, Oregon, and Martins are union houses. Reinholds Church was built in 1874, Rothsville in 1880, Stevens in 1895, Akron in 1901, and the Home Chapel in 1906.

In 1913 a number of the Church became interested in starting a Mission in Lancaster city. Before it was opened a group came together time after time for prayer and a deeper consecration to God. The first services were held in the open air. The first building was a one-story house at 521 Woodward Street, which was dedicated September 7th, 1913. The work was carried on through regular services, street meetings, and cottage prayer meetings. As the work grew, more room was needed. This need was supplied for a time by renting the adjoining house and in 1915 by purchasing a new location at 551 Rockland Street. New phases of the work developed such as serving Christmas dinners, serving refreshments, distributing literature, and visiting the city jail and the county home. Some of the faithful workers who served this mission were Anna (Lane) Hostetter, Ada Reitz, and Brother and Sister John Weaver. The members of the Church who supported

them were rewarded by seeing a number of souls being helped spiritually. At a later date the work was discontinued to the disappointment of a number who worked and prayed for its welfare. But the interest in missionary work has not died out, as the United Zion's Children are now cooperating with the Brethren in Christ in mission work.

Benevolent work in the Church has included the care of children and the care of old people. The Mizpah Faith Home was organized and chartered in 1922. In 1924 the Church relinquished its control in favor of a county-wide, undenominational organization. The work is a child-placing agency rather than an institution. This Home was started by Reverend and Mrs. Bicksler, of Fredericksburg.

The old people's home, called the United Zion's Home, started as a home for the homeless in 1904, under the name, Home for the Homeless United Zion's Children's Church. This work was started by Mrs. Firestone in a private home. The home was rechartered in 1923 as the United Zion's Home. Additions were gradually made to the plant over a period of thirty years. In 1940 a rededication took place, due to most of the home being replaced by a large modern newly equipped building. Reverend James A. Heitler was the first manager of this work. Mr. and Mrs. Allen Tennis will long be remembered for their labor of love at this home.

The history of this Church would not be complete without an account of the organization at Martinsburg and in Franklin County, Pennsylvania. The work at Martinsburg was similar to the Church development in Franklin County. As the work at both of these places did not continue to prosper, one account will suffice to reveal the reason. You will recall the work in Dauphin, Lebanon, and Lancaster Counties grew

through revival efforts. The work in these other counties started through dissatisfied members leaving the Brethren in Christ and organizing as a congregation of United Zion's Children. At Martinsburg the seceders organized in the old Stoner mansion on February 22, 1892. J. S. Bassler was the first minister, and later C. B. Stoner, S. B. Smith, and Charles W. Garber were ordained as the need required.

At first the new congregation worshipped in the school-house at the southern end of town. Later, the old St. Matthew Lutheran Church property was purchased, where preaching services were held at stated times. For several years a large and successful union Sunday School was conducted in the Church building by the United Zion's Children. The members were earnest, sincere, and active but no outstanding revival resulted from the work. Through death, moving to other parts, and some returning to the Church they left, the group became so small that those who remained disbanded.

The views and methods of Church work which these United Zion's Children of Dauphin, Lebanon, and Lancaster Counties sought to impress upon the Church they left have long been accepted and put into practice by the Brethren in Christ Church. This remains a monument to those who have gone to their reward, and the good they did is a precious memory that lives after them. The feeling is quite general at this present writing, that we are all brethren.

The Church leaders at present are called Elders, or Bishops. The preaching is done by the Elders, or Bishops, or by other brethren called either Ministers, or Preachers. To assist in the work the Church has appointed Deacons, or Visiting Brethren. This organization is effected to serve the Laity. The Elders and Deacons look after the business end of the

Church as those who serve. The ministers are given their rightful place as taught in the Word of God. They have the right to receive members, perform baptism, administer communion, anoint the sick, perform marriages, and arrange for meeting appointments. They, as God's ministers, are the feeders of the flock entrusted unto them. The United Zion's Children are some of the best people on the earth, according to the testimony of one born and reared in their midst, but who at present is not a member of the organization.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Ada Reitz assisted in gathering this history of the United Zion's Children.





## CHAPTER VIII

### GROWTH WESTWARD

The growth of the Brethren in Christ Church westward came after the work was thoroughly established in Pennsylvania and Canada. The call "young man go West," reached members of this body of believers just the same as it did other people of Pennsylvania. It was a call to a more level open country which offered new opportunities to those willing and brave enough to venture. The call was answered not only by the young, but by those of middle age and some quite matured in years. Everything pointed not only to better opportunities from a material standpoint, but also to new privileges to spread the work of the Master in newly settled lands. Believers and unbelievers settling in new lands with the same problems were bound together by common interests. This resulted in open hearts and open doors which otherwise would not have been realized.

The first state to be reached was Ohio. The Brethren settling permanently on the rich and fertile farms of this state were never sorry for their choice. Soon after the Brethren from Pennsylvania reached Ohio, some from Ontario reached Indiana. The next state after Indiana to hear the songs and prayers of the Brethren in Christ was Illinois. The first members to this state came from Ohio. Those leaving Ohio were not certain where they wanted to make their permanent home, so moved farther west. Some families also reached the great corn belt of Iowa, which was equal to Illinois in pro-

ducing this golden crop. Some years after Illinois was blessed with settlers of this faith, some members from Canada moved to Michigan. To this day the traveler, acquainted with details of customs in Ontario, Indiana, and Michigan can see the similarity of certain practices in these three parts. The next state to have Brethren settle on its soil was the sunflower land of Kansas. Those who came to this state were from Pennsylvania. The fruitful seasons held out great promises for these settlers, but periods of drought caused some of them to leave these wheat fields for the south and still farther west. Some went to Oklahoma, while others from states farther east than Kansas, as well as from Kansas, reached California, after first trying to live in New Mexico. Those in Oklahoma became acquainted with the growing of cotton, while those in California delighted themselves in clearing away the rocks to start orange and lemon groves. Texas heard the Gospel from some of this faith, but in this southern state the work did not take permanent root.

OHIO. Giving consideration to the Church in these states in the order in which they were first reached by members brings us first to Ohio. This state has more Brethren in Christ places of worship than any other of the middle or western states. At present, Clark County District has one place of worship in the city of Springfield. There are two regular places of worship in the Dayton District, the one in Dayton, and the other at Fairview. The Miami County district has two places of worship, one at Highland and the other at Pleasant Hill. The Richland and Ashland district has two places of worship, one in Richland County, and the other in Ashland County. The Wayne County district and the Stark County district each has one place of worship, the one at Sippo and the other near

Canton. The work of the Church has not been limited to these places mentioned. Through the years a number of other places of worship have been used and at present, other points are reached through special periods of services.

The work in southern Ohio has been somewhat stronger through the years than the work in northern Ohio. The difference has not been sufficiently great to look for any reasons. The results of a study would no doubt reveal that which is true of other sections, that no specific reasons could be given. There is no certainty that these Brethren in southern Ohio labored any more faithfully than did those in northern Ohio.

Family names in the Church in southern Ohio at the beginning of the work were Rasor, Wenger, Wilhelm, Oblinger, Herr, Dohner, Cassel, Barnhart, Coffman, and Hocker. Other families soon joined the group, some coming from other parts, and others from the community joining with them in fellowship. Engles moved from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, to Illinois, and after a few years' stay returned east as far as Ohio, and settled there permanently. According to the history of Montgomery County, Ohio, Samuel Herr was a native of Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, and when a boy learned the tanning trade. This history states that the Herrs came to Ohio in 1832. It is evident that the Church started in southern Ohio soon after 1830 and has continued to exert an influence for good in this part of the nation for over one hundred years.

Church leaders over a period of years included John Wenger, Samuel Herr, John Coffman, Daniel Coffman, John Byer, Levi Lukenbach, Jacob Wenger, Abraham Harley, and others. The first two mentioned were ministers in the

early days, and the next four were Overseers. Abraham Harley was an able minister with a pleasing personality and gifted in revival work. A division arose between Brother Harley and the Overseer, which resulted in what became known as the "Wengerites."

For some years the work in southern Ohio was all one District, known as the Dayton District. Brethren lived ten to twenty-five miles to the north and about the same distance to the east. These scattered groups of brethren held their meetings jointly. Long, slow trips were necessary to come together for worship. In all kinds of weather, and over very poor roads, the ministers went from one locality to another on horseback to attend services and visit the members. This sacrifice was considered a privilege, rather than a duty. The definite experiences of salvation made these members enjoy the opportunity of working for God. An example of one conversion will make clear to the reader the spirit which came into their hearts. It is told how the very darkness seemed to turn to light when Samuel Herr received the Holy Spirit while in secret devotion in the barn one night, very shortly after being saved at an altar of prayer. As a young man, he was proud, according to his own confession, but after taking the whole way with his Lord, his conscience would not permit him to do a number of things he had done before. He would often tell how the Spirit fell upon him, flooding his soul, and quickening his body from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet. The members would tell their children and grandchildren of the conviction which used to fall in the services, causing sinners to cry out for mercy.

In 1865, Levi Lukenbach came to Ohio from Pennsylvania and became Overseer of a large part of the Church. His



name was mentioned in the chapter on the Church in Pennsylvania. He was born in York County, Pennsylvania, October the second, 1817. When a young man, he moved to Lykens Valley, near Millersburg, Pennsylvania. He taught school for a time and in 1835 he was elected to the ministry in Lykens Valley. After some years of service in this Valley, he moved to Center County and from there to Ohio. For sixty-five years father Lukenbach had been a Christian believer, and for sixty-two years an ordained minister. He was a faithful follower of his Master to the end of his days. In his declining years he constructed articles of furniture, and was often heard say: "My Master was a carpenter, and I am proud to imitate Him." His funeral was conducted by the Reverends Jacob Wenger and Harvey Miller, January the third, 1896. His grave can be seen in the Highland cemetery.

When brother Lukenbach was too old to care for the work of the Church properly, he requested help. Jacob B. Wingert was chosen in response to the request, becoming Overseer in 1889. Brother Wingert served more or less under the direction of Brother Lukenbach until 1895. In 1902 Brother Wingert requested to be relieved as Overseer, and General Conference appointed leaders from other districts. In 1904, southern Ohio was divided into three districts, as stated above. The first elected Overseers of these districts were J. N. Hoover, ordained in 1905 as leader of Miami District; J. B. Wingert continued in his office, but only for Clark County; A. M. Engle was elected for Montgomery District and served until his death in 1913.

Three Church buildings were constructed before the division of the work into three districts. The Fairview meeting-house was built first. Samuel Herr donated the ground for

this building, and after some opposition was broken down, the building was erected in 1876. In 1886 a commodious Church was built near the village of Donnelsville, and one at Highland in 1890. The work at Pleasant Hill was a later development, and it was not until about 1912 that the Brethren had full ownership of a Church which they purchased. In 1911 a Church was built in the city of Springfield and the Donnelsville Church ceased to be used, except for love feast services once a year. The old graveyard by the Donnelsville Church is an historic landmark and can be found, when driving west, by turning right at Donnelsville off of route forty.

It is impossible to give due credit to each one who has been instrumental through the years in furthering the work of the Master in these parts. Outstanding representatives of more recent years are left for future historians to tell. My reader has noticed in all the chapters that this has been the method followed, except in the more recent developments of Church work. Many more family names might be added to the list of those who were faithful workers, such as Heisey, Hoke, Free, Hoover, Ulery, Miller, Boyer, and others. Through mission work and summer tent services, the Church has continued to keep the Gospel story vital in this section of Ohio. The early fathers of these districts laid greatest stress on being born again, and separation from the world. This stress has not been forgotten but in addition, the teaching of sanctification has been given much prominence.

A glimpse into the council meetings of this part of the Church reveals the practical application of the Gospel by way of helping those in need. In the council of August 5th, 1882, it was decided to pay a doctor bill of one of the members. In a council held April 5th, 1884, a committee was appointed to

investigate the loss and damage caused by a storm to the home of a member. July 31, 1886, it was decided to take up an offering to help a brother in another part of the Church. In a council held April 2nd, 1887, it was decided that the Church assist a sister by way of clothing and other necessities of life, if needed. November 26, 1887, it was decided to help a certain brother, in that he was in needy circumstances. On this same date it was decided that the deacons when on their regular visits should make an appeal to each member in their districts for some contribution to the mission work.

Some members moved north from the southern part of the state and others came from Pennsylvania direct to the northern part and thus the work developed in the other counties mentioned above. In the vicinities of Canton and Massillon a number of congregations developed and for many years they have been keepers of the light. Some of these places have not continued to the present, due to a lack of growth in the work. The Church buildings and dates of erection are Valley Chapel brick Church, built about 1860<sup>1</sup>, Guyers brick Chapel built about 1868, Paradise frame Church built the same year, and Sippo Valley frame Church, built in 1875.

Among the leaders who have passed to their reward are some men of outstanding note. When deacon Saxton Bowers was old and bent with years he took your author in the dark of night to the grave of W. O. Baker near the Valley Chapel Church. The path to the grave was lighted by a small oil burning lantern carried by Brother Bowers. There we stood in deep silence by the grave of this father who meant much to the Brethren in Christ Church. Other leaders of this part of

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1. If this date is correct it is the first church built in the Brethren in Christ Church.

the Church who are asleep beneath the sod, having served their day and generation well, are: Jacob Hoffman, Joseph Hershey, and John H. Smith. Other ministers are John Dick, D. H. Rohrer, Aaron Bechtel, Christian Grabill, Christian Balmer, Samuel Rice, Elias Schrock, Benjamin Brenner, George Benner, and Samuel Longenecker. Besides these names given many worthy deacons and lay members are still remembered by both the Church and the communities in which they lived.

Dr. William Overholt Baker, generally spoken of as W. O. Baker, was born December 12th, 1827, in Pennsylvania. When a lad of nine years of age he moved with his parents to Ohio. In the fall of 1848 he began teaching at Paradise, Green Township, Wayne County, Ohio. It was while teaching here that he first learned of the Brethren in Christ. The first service he attended was out of curiosity to see what these people were like who were called Holy Brethren. The first service he attended was at Brother Brenner's. The three ministers present from Ashland County, Ohio were Jos. Eshelman, David Whistler, and John Brubaker. The service and the fact that the members were well thought of in the community brought conviction. During revival efforts in 1851, 1852, and 1853, Brother Baker was convicted and he finally yielded and received the assurance of being pardoned. In 1855 he was baptized in Sugar Creek, near Paradise, by Brother Jacob Hoffman and rejoiced that he was numbered with the little flock.

Brother Baker was a medical doctor and began to practice in 1855 at Pilot Knob, Ohio. A few years later he moved to Louisville, where he remained until his death. It is claimed he would anoint with oil when requested and in such cases



would not give medicine if the patient preferred not to use drugs. This fitted in well with his being a minister, which office he received in 1860 and was made Overseer in 1890. He is remembered by the Church for his treatise on Washing the Saints' Feet, his article on Sanctification as a member of the committee on sanctification as a definite work of grace, his work as associate editor of the *Evangelical Visitor*, his service as General Conference moderator, and his service on the Foreign Mission Board.

In the Richland-Ashland district there are two meeting-houses. The Chestnut Grove Church was built in 1874 and the Pleasant Grove Church in 1875. The early settlers came from Pennsylvania. The first four were John Brubaker, a minister, Peter Brubaker, a deacon, Christian Kauffman, a deacon, and Joseph Charles. It was soon after 1840 when members of the Brethren in Christ first came to this part of Ohio. One of the Brubakers bought five farms from the Government, containing one hundred and sixty acres each, at five hundred dollars per farm. Three of these farms are still in the possession of members of the Church. Two farms have large typical Pennsylvania Dutch brick houses on them. The early settlers besides clearing the land from the heavy forests, made and burnt their own brick for these dwellings.

Henry Hoover, by request of some of his friends, came to Ohio from Pennsylvania some time before 1850. Through the assistance of faithful members he built up the work at Pleasant Grove in Richland County. The first service held at the home of Samuel Whisler Sr. was about 1858, at Henry Hoover's home about 1860 and at Koch's in 1866. The earliest love feast was held at Henry Hoover's about 1862. In the summer the services were held in barns instead of the



houses. Preaching was conducted once each month in the homes of Henry Hoover, Christian Kauffman, and John Brubaker.

The first three Overseers from the time the district was formed were Joseph Hershey, David Whistler, Sr., and B. F. Hoover. Other ministers besides these brethren and John Brubaker were: David Whisler, Christian Roland, Henry Roland, Samuel Whisler, and Daniel Kohler. Some of the deacons who served were Peter Brubaker, Christ Kauffman, Nathan Steigerwald, Benjamin Brubaker, Philip Baum, and David Brubaker. Brother Kauffman donated the ground for the Pleasant Grove Church and Joseph Charles donated the ground for the Chestnut Grove Church. Peter Brubaker and Henry Roland donated the ground for the Chestnut Grove Cemetery.

For many years the Brethren did not approve of the building of Churches for worship. A change came when the congregation was large enough for a regular place of worship, and when Church buildings had been built in other parts of the brotherhood. There is an interesting statement in the deed of the Chestnut Grove Church lot. It reads, "This deed shall stand as long as the sun shines and water runs." A description of one of these Church buildings in this district by a local member is well put: "The building itself is very plain. There are two entrance doors, one for the ladies and one for the gentlemen. The seats are hard and straight, the pulpit severe and unlovely. The good old mourner's bench stood in front mutely beckoning for heavy laden and oppressed souls to come and find rest. There were no carpets on the floors. The racks did not contain hymnals nor was there a clock upon

the wall. They felt God wished them to be as plain in their worship as they were in their dress and demeanor."

In 1891 the brethren realized the need of contact with the younger people. Up until this time the young folks had been attending other Church Sunday Schools. Now an organization was effected with Samuel Whisler as superintendent. The next superintendents were Henry Roland and Frank Hershey. The Sunday School was a means of expansion in the Church. Revivals among the young people broke out and in 1896, five years after establishing the Sunday School, under the preaching of John Stump and others, thirty young people came to the Church.

INDIANA. Going farther west to the state of Indiana, we find the Brethren in Christ reached the state one hundred years ago and started a work which has continued to this day. The first minister was Daniel Stump, who lived in Elkhart County. Sally Stump and brother and sister Eli Mishler came to Indiana from Vaughn Township, Ontario, Canada, in 1838. They owned the land where the present Union Grove Church now stands in Union Township, Elkhart County. About two years later the Cobers and Heises came to these same parts from Canada. The Church from this small beginning has continued to sow the seed which has resulted in a harvest of souls. Daniel Stump was made Overseer in 1850. On Brother Stump's departure from this life, he was laid to rest in the Union Center Cemetery, Union Township, Nappanee.

There are three places of worship in Indiana. Two Churches are in the vicinity of Nappanee, and the other near Garrett. The first Church was built in 1887 and has since been im-

proved by putting a basement under it. The Locke Church had formerly been owned by another denomination and for some years was rented by the Brethren in Christ. Later the building was purchased and in 1915 it was remodeled and put in better condition for use. The date of the building of the Union Chapel at Garrett has not been learned, but it was rebuilt in 1908. The first Church building, known as Union Grove, was built on Sister Lizzie Smith's farm. The Union Chapel was built on Jacob Brechbill's farm. In both cases the land for the Church property was donated by the members on whose land the Churches were built.

The first love feast was held at the home of Daniel Stump. David Whisler, an Overseer from Ohio, had general charge of the service. The love feasts were held in the barns of the members until the first Church was built. When this district started to hold revival meetings, schoolhouses in the community were used. One of the revivals on which God's blessing seemed most outstanding was conducted by Reverend H. H. Menagh, the blind minister, in 1907. From this revival on, Bible Conferences became a regular feature of the Church services. Special Sunday School meetings began about the same date, but the Sunday School proper started in 1887. It seemed all the members were interested in starting a Sunday School and Jacob Stump was the first superintendent.

Sacred memories linger around the names of the leaders of this district. Martin Hoover was the second Overseer and John A. Stump the third Overseer. John Brown, Benjamin Stump, M. M. Shirk, Amos Bechtel, and Christian Good were some of the earlier ministers. The first two deacons were Amos Bechtel and Henry Greenawalt. Family names which

will long be remembered in connection with the work near Garrett are Davidson, Foote, and Brechbill.

ILLINOIS. It was in the spring of 1865 when Reverend Isaac Trump and family moved from Canton, Ohio, to the state of Illinois. They settled eight miles north of Dixon in Ogle County. Christian Stoner and his family had moved to the same neighborhood. In 1866, Reverend Stephenson Richardson, with his family, moved to this part of Illinois from Louisville, Ohio. The Daniel Bower family moved to Illinois about seven miles from Polo, near Brookville. Reverend Peter Lichty moved to Albany, Illinois, a distance of fifty miles from some of the other brethren. This was a prosperous country, but the brethren did not neglect gathering to worship God. The work of the Church continued to develop until this northern Illinois district included three counties, Ogle, Whiteside, and Stephenson.

The first Overseer was Peter Lichty who faithfully cared for the work. He would drive to the various services with his horse and buggy. Not all of the trips were fifty miles one way, but many took a great deal of time. He had time for meditation as he rode over the fertile soil of this great state. No wonder some of the older brethren thought a minister should be a farmer, since the farmer had more time for meditation. This is no longer true today, but in that day it was true, for Brother Lichty at least. His coming, which was about every twelve weeks, was looked forward to with much joy and gladness. Only those members who have had the experience of living in a group few in number, and sometimes far apart, understand the fellowship of God's children of the same faith. The people were hungry for the services and easy to speak to, and the presence of the Lord was precious.



At first there were no regular appointments. The few meetings that were held at the beginning were conducted in the schoolhouses and in churches of other denominations. In 1875 a Church house was built, called the Pinecreek Church. The work was divided into three districts in 1875, and known as Pinecreek and Polo district which included Polo, Mt. Morris, and Brookville; the Shannon district which included Shannon, Freeport, and Lanark; the Clide district which included Albany, Morrison, and Franklin Corners. In 1894 a Church house was built at the last mentioned place. In a revival held in 1868 by Peter Lichty and Joseph Shirk, there were thirty-six converts. Through the faithfulness of the members and through revival efforts, the Church prospered.

Suddenly a change came in relation to the work of the Church. Members began moving both east and west. So many left that the work at Pinecreek was discontinued, and instead, on account of a number moving to Polo, services were held for a time in the Evangelical Church in Polo. This change in the work made it advisable to unite the three districts into one and it was named the northern Illinois District.

This history of Illinois given thus far was received from Brother H. L. Trump. In another report from the same section, it is claimed that Peter Lichty and Conrad Myers came from Dauphin County, Pennsylvania in 1846 to near Freeport, Stephen County. Brother Christian Good moved to Chambers Grove, Lima County, five miles south of Shannon about 1850. Henry L. Shirk came from Blair County, Pennsylvania. In 1869 David Stoner and Joseph Bowers moved from Stark County, Ohio. This account states the Church was built in 1881.



The early leaders of this section have gone to their reward and their works do follow them. Peter Lichty, the first Overseer, is buried at Albany, Whiteside County, and Isaac Trump took up his mantle. Brother Trump spent much of his time holding evangelistic meetings both at home and in other districts. He held meetings in Iowa, Kansas, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Canada. His delight was to be in a revival meeting and the Lord blessed his labors. It was characteristic of Brother Trump to admonish the Church concerning peace, good will, and cheerfulness. He was cheerful wherever he went. On his first trip to Canada he took quite a number of apples along, so he would have apples to eat. He thought that a country so far north could not grow apples. At a later date he told on himself, how he hid his apples, which were not nearly as fine as those grown in Ontario. He came to a farm home where a son of the family was churning with a barrel churn. As the lad turned the churn, he whistled, then sang, then whistled again, as a means of entertaining himself. Brother Trump said to the lad, "Let me churn and see if it makes me whistle and sing." Soon after he started to churn he, too, whistled and sang. He was not the type of revivalist who in a prophet-like attitude, condemned all but himself, including the joys of living.

Other early leaders were Abraham Miller, a deacon, who lived northwest of Mount Morris, and Elias Thomas, who held the same office. Other early deacons were Christian Good, David Stoner, and John Harman. Peter Lichty, Conrad Myers, Moses Myers, Joseph Shirk, and Joseph Bowers were all ordained ministers before reaching Illinois. Henry L. Shirk was elected to the ministry in 1871, Michael Shirk in 1872, Abraham Myers in 1875, William H. Kreider in 1892. Our beloved brother J. R. Zook also came from this section.

Space must be given to two more leaders and mention made of their work before considering the history of other parts of the Church, namely Reverend Abram G. Zook and Reverend William E. McCulloh. Brother Zook was born September 25th, 1854. He was taken to Illinois in 1856. He was ordained to the ministry in 1884. He is remembered as the founder of the Mt. Carmel Orphanage which opened in March, 1900. Brother McCulloh moved from Pennsylvania to Illinois, where he reared his family and spent many years in Christian work. He is an example of a Christian father who took time to point his family to God and also to reach the unsaved in the community. Brother H. L. Trump, who became Overseer of the work in Illinois since 1917, pays this tribute to Brother McCulloh: He was "led of the Lord to give time and labor to help the people to have regular Church services such as prayer meetings and preaching. He has been serving the community with some blessed results. A number have been converted to the Lord. Among them Sister Grace Miller, who later became a missionary to the foreign field." Many a Sunday Brother McCulloh would drive ten miles to a morning service and then would start across the country for a fifteen mile drive to another point where he would give the message of God in love. One of his sons would cross the country several miles with another team of horses for the full day's drive was too long for one team.

MICHIGAN. Somewhere between 1875 and 1900 several families of the Brethren in Christ moved from Waterloo district, Canada, and settled in Greenwood Township, St. Clair County, Michigan. This was the beginning of the work in this state. To trace the history of all the efforts in Michigan is practically impossible. So many scattered families through

the years resulted in services being held for a time at one point and then at another. This state remains to this day more or less an open door for much more work to be done than has been accomplished. For a time, the work was under the leadership of Benjamin Shupe, an Overseer from Waterloo district, Ontario.

A better picture of the spread of the work soon after the Church started in Michigan will be had by noticing where the members lived. Over fifty members were scattered in twelve different places, and some were a considerable distance apart. There were fifteen members at Brockway Centre in St. Clair County. The family names were Cressman, Graybill, Hallman, Hershey, Kitely, Reichard, Slosser, Staple, Wye, and Zoeller. At two points there were six members each and at one nine. There were six individual members by the name Davidson, and six by the name Waterson at White Pigeon, in St. Joseph County; nine members including the family names of Dervsa, Groh, Palmytier, Temple, and Vanderveer at Elmer in Sanilac County; and six at Constantine, St. Joseph County. The family names of the last mentioned six were Shollenberger and Stauffer. The four families at Brown City Sanilac County, were Bakers, Temples, and Witmers. There were three members at Bridgehampton, in Sanilac County, namely, Mater, Stantenburg, and Wagg. At East Greenwood, St. Clair County, were two members, one family name Main, and the other Muma. Also two at Sandusky, Sanilac County, Wenger, and Smeckert. A brother Freeman lived at Greenwood Centre, St. Clair County; a Gingerick at Ubly, Huron County; a Meyers at Burton, Shiawassee County, and a Wanner at Imlay City, Lapeer County.<sup>2</sup>

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2. Directory: **Brethren in Christ**, Marietta, Pennsylvania, Urie B. Engle, Printer, 1886.

The places of worship at present are Carland Zion Church, built in 1915; Gladwin, Mt. Carmel Church, built in 1924; Clement, Oak Grove Log Church, built in 1934; and Sandusky Mooretown Church, built about 1880 at Ship Center. The first Church building was erected in Greenwood township, St. Clair County. The ministers at this first place were Samuel Wanner, Wendell Hallman, George Kiteley, and Samuel Reichard. For some reason the work ceased to prosper. A number moved away and some joined other churches. The Church building was torn down and used to build the Church at Merrill.

While the work was in progress at Greenwood, some of the brethren made regular trips about thirty miles to the northwest and held meetings in schoolhouses, a number united with the Church. The Church work did not become large and preaching once or twice a month was not conducive to growth. The brethren also held services about ten miles northeast at a place called Custer. This is where sister Wagg lived, who with her husband and family moved from Canada. Sister Wagg, hearing about the brethren, wrote to brother Samuel Reichard and asked him to make them a visit. Brother Reichard accepted the invitation and made the visit by horse and buggy, a distance of nearly forty miles. He traveled through new country and over poor roads, but was well paid for the trip by finding an earnest sister in the faith. As the work grew, brother Mater was elected to the office of Deacon. Brother Mater was a loving Christian, faithful in his work and an inspiration in the services. He was interested in providing for the ministers so they would have more time to devote to Church work.

The Michigan Church has had some splendid leaders and



lay members. Avery Long, of Pennsylvania, served as Pastor of the Mooretown Church for a time. He was followed by George Kiteley and J. D. Powell. Myron Taylor who died on the African mission field after being hurt by a lion, served in Michigan. His brother, Walter Taylor, who so faithfully preached in Ontario, came from Michigan. Brother Walter Taylor was ordained to the ministry by Jonathan Lyons, of Canada. Brother Lyons served as Overseer in Michigan a number of years. He came to Michigan in 1904. He was ordained as minister when he came and was ordained Overseer about eight years later. He sacrificed much for the work and is worthy of commendation. The faithful blind wife of William Vanderveer is remembered for her zeal and for never being absent from Church services if it were at all possible for her to be present. Brother Henry Schneider Sr. will long be remembered. This fine old gentleman spent many hours making mottoes for Churches and homes. Thus one might write on concerning the faithful of the Michigan Church, but there must be a stopping point.

IOWA. The state of Iowa never had a large number of members of the Brethren in Christ at one time. This state is noted for its farming advantages and especially for the growing of corn. This should have appealed to the farmers of the Church, but the hand which guides the destiny of men led only a few to this state. According to the directory of 1886, there were twenty-four members in the state at that time. Twenty of these lived in Tama County, two in Benton County, one in Blackhawn, and one in Franklin County. The work developed into a district called Dallas Center District and a mission project in the city of Des Moines. The mission work will be considered under that phase of the Church work. The



Church in the district was built at Dallas Center in 1899. It is a medium sized frame Church which has served its purpose well through the years.

A number of the leaders and members will be remembered for years to come. Joe Shirk and J. R. Zook will be remembered as Overseers. John Hawbaker, Harrison Barwick, and W. C. Deemy will be remembered for their labors in the ministry. Daniel Hawbaker, Samuel Good, and Samuel Herr are remembered for their work as deacons. Family names dating back to 1886 are Wurtzel, Schramp, Miller, Millard, Manly, Knupp, Hupfield, Holty, Gnagy, Fike, Myers, Longenecker, and Kinderfather.

Of those who have passed to their reward, brother and sister J. R. Zook have been outstanding as Church leaders in the state. Sister Zook was a sweet, Godly mother, beloved by all. Strangers would be drawn to her because of her radiant face and sweet disposition. When in a large department store a clerk came from behind the counter and kissed Sister Zook, a person with Sister Zook said, "Who is that lady?" Sister Zook with a smile replied, "I do not know."

Brother Zook was born in Illinois, near Morrison, November 4th, 1857. He spent a number of years in his early life teaching school and studying. He attended Valparaiso University at least one session. When he moved to Iowa he left a large farm which he owned and later willed to the Church. From 1893 to his death, his time was spent in mission work, evangelistic work, and in writing. Many members, including your author, can point back to a revival held by brother Zook as the time they confessed Christ as their Savior. His sermons were well organized and enriched from his study with

important truths. Of his writings his book, "He Is Coming, Who Is Ready?" is his most valuable work. This book of almost two hundred pages covers carefully this theme. He published a booklet of thirty-four pages, entitled "Holiness and Empowerment." His third work is a pamphlet entitled, "A Guide for Instructors to Instruct Penitent Seekers of Holiness and Empowerment and Divine Healing." He was a member of the committee appointed by Conference to report on the teaching of Sanctification as a definite work, and the committee to report on the washing of the saints' feet. His definite teaching on holiness, divine healing, and the giving of the tenth did not make him popular in some sections of the Church. He stands out among the leaders of the Church as a great spiritual father and a promoter of evangelism, mission work, and education. His glorious departure in the Highland Church, Ohio, November 6, 1919, was a fitting climax to his godly life. He fell dead in the pulpit while conducting a testimony service, and at the close of a song which he requested to be sung. He requested the congregation to sing with uplifted hands and to smile while they sang. He passed to his reward just as a brother<sup>3</sup> finished singing the song through alone, "If Jesus Should Come, I'd leave Without Saying Good-bye." These are the words of one stanza of one of the songs he wrote:

One by one we're taking leave,  
One by one our crowns receive.  
Children dear while here we roam  
Honor father, mother, home,

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3. For many years the members of the Church called each other brother and sister. Mr., Mrs., and Miss are now used by some members.

Keep your love on earth aglow, aglow,  
Have true friendship here below.  
May we all united stand,  
Here, and in the better land.

A recent extension of the Church in South Dakota has resulted in the work in Iowa and Dakota being joined as one district under the name, Iowa-South Dakota District.

## CHAPTER IX

### WESTWARD TO CALIFORNIA

The sunflower state is next to take our attention in the growth of the Church westward. The Brethren in Christ Church in Dickinson County, Kansas was organized in 1879, when what is known as the colony from Pennsylvania moved to this County. Some of the colony settled north of the river and others south of the river, but it was organized as one district at first.

The first Overseer was Jesse M. Engle, who moved from Cumberland County, Pennsylvania. The first ministers were Benjamin Gish, Jacob Eisenhower, and Peter Bert. Benjamin B. Engle and Abram N. Engle were the deacons.

Some members moved to Kansas before the colony went. Some of those who went earlier were John E. Allison and family, John Musser and family, David Book and family, Jacob F. Eisenhower, the Pyke family, and some of the Berts. These were the pioneers to this new and untried country.

To understand why a colony would move from Pennsylvania to the Kansas plains, it is necessary to know about the history of the growing of wheat, which is Kansas' number one crop. This account of how Kansas learned of the possibilities of winter wheat was given in the Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, Telegraph about the year 1937. This account mentions that Abilene in 1860 was a sprawling little cow town dropped

in the middle of a vast rolling prairie. At this time the town depended upon Texas cattle, driven in over the famous Chisholm Trail, for its existence.

First mayor of Abilene was Theodore C. Henry, a land agent and, at heart, a practical farmer. Henry held the mayoralty post for eighteen months, from 1869 to 1871. He realized that Abilene's prosperity was a false one—that it depended upon the Texas cattle shipments. One day the railroads would send tracks down into Texas and the old Chisholm Trail would cease to exist, Abilene likewise. As mayor, Henry openly advocated extensive agriculture in the rich prairie land the town was built on, but the—cattlemen ridiculed his idea. Henry, in the summer of 1870, sensed an impending crash in the cattle market. From daily examination of market reports from Minnesota he saw winter wheat topped the Chicago grain market. Winter wheat was a new thing in the west, and Minnesota grew it extensively. Perhaps, Henry thought, it might grow in the Abilene district also.

Realizing that he threatened his political standing in the community by opposing the cattle interests, Henry was forced to work on his new idea in secrecy. He swore his family to silence and in a little valley he owned, hidden from view by clumps of trees, Henry planted the first five acres of winter wheat in Kansas. Strange as it seems, after the cold weather of that year a new hardy wheat sprouted and in July, 1871, he announced his experiment as a success. Farmers were overjoyed at the prospects. An edict was issued to the Texas cattle men to stay away from Abilene and drive their cattle to other railroad terminals. Theodore Henry's idea turned out even better than he had hoped. Steel rails did push on into the west, carrying flashing, streamlined trains through a 5000-acre wheatfield, biggest in America, outgrowth of Henry's original five acres! Winter wheat today leads all others in Kansas, the 1930 survey showed a product of 158,442,000 bushels against only 44,000 bushels of spring wheat.

It was in 1877 that a number of Brethren from Pennsylvania went to Kansas to see the country. Among the group were John M. Sheets, Benjamin J. Brubaker, and Jacob Shelley. There was a bountiful wheat crop that year, so they returned with a good report. So many members became interested that it was decided to go as a colony. In 1878 at a



Church conference held at Montgomery, Pennsylvania, a petition was presented and passed for the group to go as an organized Church body.

The train on which the colony traveled left Harrisburg March 25th, 1879. The people came until eleven cars were filled with people and baggage. There were almost three hundred men, women, and children. These were not all members of the Church. Some of the heads of families of the Church were Jesse Engle, Benjamin Gish, Benjamin Engle, A. M. Engle, John Forney, Eli Hoffman, Christian Hoffman, and John M. Sheets. They did not all reach Abilene until Saturday morning, March 28th.

The trip to Kansas did not seem long, due to the train being fairly comfortable and there were points of interest to see as they traveled. The coaches were lighted at night with candles attached to the sides of the car. There was an arrangement at the bottom of the candleholders to push the candle up as it burnt shorter. The group were interested in such points as Horseshoe Bend, the city of Pittsburgh, the city of St. Louis, as well as the country through which they passed. From Kansas City they traveled on the Union Pacific Railroad. They were in two sections, the one reaching Abilene March 27th at four o'clock in the evening, and the other section the next morning. On reaching Abilene they were directed to the emigrant house, a building used by new settlers, until they would find other homes. This was a two-story building thirty-two feet wide and eighty feet long. During a period of worship in the emigrant house the colony thanked God for arriving safely in this new land. They were now interested in seeing the town and country and to get settled in their own homes. Much of the time of the first day was spent in walk-

ing around the town. The next day being Sunday, the colony took a walk into the country. They went as far as Smokyhill river, the stream that later became the dividing line of the Church into the North and South Dickinson. The immediate days ahead were used in getting located and erecting homes. There were some carpenters in the colony and they were in great demand, due to the many buildings that the colony needed. The days ahead were busy ones, but the Lord's day was respected and the colony ceased their labors for rest and worship.

In 1881, in that more help was needed in the ministry, an election was held with the understanding that one brother was to be chosen from the North and one from the South. The election was held in September, which resulted in the choice of John M. Sheets for the north side of the river, and Jacob N. Engle for the south side of the river. Brother Sheets was thirty-three years old when elected to the ministry and brother Engle was twenty-three years old.

In the fall of 1877, Jacob and Daniel Bert, of Franklin County, Pennsylvania, moved to Brown County, Kansas, and instead of settling permanently they worked in the community. Later in the season they went to Dickinson County and seeing the opportunity to obtain good land at a reasonable price, they decided it was a good place to purchase farms. They wrote to their father, Peter Bert, Sr., asking him if he would not help them with means to buy land, but he replied that he wanted to see the country for himself before giving the money. So late in the fall of 1877, Peter Bert went west and he was pleased with the land in Kansas. He purchased three quarter sections of land at seven dollars per acre, about thirteen miles north of Abilene, near Chapman

Creek. In the spring of 1878, Peter Bert moved to Kansas with his family and he, with Jacob and Daniel Bert, occupied the land. The same fall he bought one hundred sixty acres of land five miles north of Detroit, which Samuel Bert occupied in the spring of 1879, two weeks before the Lancaster colony moved west. In the spring of 1879, March 7th, Peter Bert arrived at Detroit with the other members of his family including Anna, Lizzie (Bert) Brubaker and her husband, Benjamin, and Sarah. John was the only one who stayed in Pennsylvania.

During the following year, after the colony went from Pennsylvania one family after another moved to Kansas as their permanent home. Reverend Elias Martin and family and Reverend Noah Zook, moved from Franklin County, Pennsylvania. Reverend Samuel B. Wengert moved from Morrison, Illinois, and settled two miles north of Hope. Reverend John Mellinger and Reverend Joseph Fike went west and settled south of Hope. Brother Mellinger went from York County a short distance from Grantham, Pennsylvania. Reverend Daniel Steckley moved from Markham District, Canada, near to Ramona. Members continued to move west, the Brechbills, Hoovers, and many others.

Reverend Samuel Zook, who was an Overseer in Franklin County, Pennsylvania, moved west in 1890. This gave the Church two Overseers, one north of the river and one south of the river. After the death of Brother Zook, Jacob N. Engle, the Overseer south of the river, served both districts several years until Millard G. Engle was ordained Overseer for the north side of the river. Many faithful ministers and deacons have served the Kansas Church through the years. One of the first to be ordained upon having a call to the ministry was the

father of Reverend Adam Book. This was a new and different method of entering the ministry in the Church. It was just natural for people to resort to this method as the Church had no standards of training for this high position. Others in Kansas followed by presenting their call of God to preach and the method spread to some extent throughout the Church. However, many continued to look with some disfavor on these who entered the office in this way.

Two small congregations developed farther north in the state, the one in Clay County, and the other in Brown County, and one south at Sedgwick. Names which will be remembered in connection with the work at the last mentioned place are Eshleman, Stouffer, Trump, and Kraybill. Reverend David Kraybill and several Musser families moved from Kansas to Idaho. Regular services were held in Idaho for a period of years. At Clay Center the Smiths, Hodels, and Heers will be remembered. Reverend John Smith cared for the work for a number of years, assisted by ministers from Dickinson County. Jacob Heer came to Clay Center in 1869 from Wurzburg, Germany. There were fifteen hundred passengers on the ship in which he came and it took sixteen days to make the voyage. Joseph Fike, from Iowa, and formerly from Pennsylvania, preached at Clay Center when the Heers came to the Church. Some of the family names familiar in the Church in Brown County are Barnhart, Byer, Eichelberger, Heise, Kern, Dull, and Harmon. This is one of the best farming sections in North America, but this proved no advantage in building a large congregation for the Brethren in Christ Church.

About 1880, the Kansas Church passed through an experience which influences the work to this day. What generally



is the case in all spiritual revivals, took place in Kansas. The spiritual awakening through the teaching of sanctification caused some to become fanatical, some to settle back into greater formality, and others to go forth with new joy and victory in their lives. Those representing the two extremes naturally opposed each other to the discomfort of both sides. The blessing which might have resulted from the new victory received was hindered by the division. Some left the Church and joined other religious bodies. Some posted their farms with Scripture verses and shouted and prayed to the full strength of their voices, and in a few cases, jumped during religious services as high as the tops of the backs of the seats. Through the various experiences which would take many pages to explain, came a blessing to the Church at large. It is largely through this awakening in Kansas that the teaching of Sanctification spread throughout the Brotherhood. The main teaching in the Church to this time was separation from the world and the New Birth. Added to this emphasis, after the awakening in Kansas was the importance of mission work to all unevangelized, and the necessity of consecration and heart purity. Brother and Sister Noah Zook were used to carry the full Gospel message to other parts of the Church and a long line of evangelists stressing the same truth have followed in their path.

To help the reader understand the direction in which the movement tended on the part of some, parts of a letter, dated February 13, 1900, are given. The letter was written at Moonlight, Kansas, and addressed to an individual in Franklin County, Pennsylvania. This letter laid in one of the Franklin County Churches for many years, and was recently found by members when cleaning the Church:



Dear Brother:

I come to you in these lines with greeting in Jesus' Blessed name. I felt like the Holy Spirit wanted me to write to you and I will obey. Praise the Lord, oh my soul and all that is within me praise his holy name for salvation from all sin. Hallelujah! to his name forever. I often think of you since I am at home again and I feel such a drawing to see you again . . . you know that is the way it is when we are dead and our life is hid with Christ in God, two sanctified souls always know each other, Hallelujah! I praise him that Jesus is precious to me more so than earthly friends. He sticketh closer than a brother and the best of all it takes *all* before we can be his disciples indeed whosoever forsaketh not father or mother or wife or children he cannot be my disciple or houses or lands.

Have you gone all the way? Oh it is blessed to know that the devil hates you and I am glad that I am on the Lord's side of every question that may come. Jesus said, "Love not the world neither the things that are in the world if any man love the world the love of the father is not in him"—again; Marvel not if the world hate you, for ye know it hated me before it hated you. Dear Bro. This Fire-baptized Movement is the Pentecostal line Hallelujah which has the dynamite of God in it that shakes heaven, earth and hell. I praise God that when this dynamite came among us it did shake things. Some who got offended at the truth are today some of our bitterest enemies. The Lord is with us because of the truth. The truth as it is in Jesus. Justification by faith, sanctification by faith, baptism of the Holy Ghost by faith, baptism of Fire by faith and the enduement of Power—or dynamite, Divine Healing, Second Coming of our Lord.

Jesus said his disciples should tarry at Jerusalem till they were endued with dynamite from the skies. I praise God that I can see God's plan and it just suits me all together. Praise his Name. We are having glorious times out here. There are only a few in number but they are clean and purified by the precious blood of Jesus and we have shouting, dancing, and singing in our camp every service and the devil is wonderfully enraged at us, but we have the shout of victory in our souls just the same.

\* \* \*

It is today just like it was in Christ's time, there were the Pharisees and Sadducees and hypocrites and He pronounced woe upon them and he does today. I praise God that he showed me who the Scribes and Pharisees are—they are the leaders of the different apostate churches of today who have a form of Godliness and deny the power or dynamite thereof and some have not even got a form of Godliness, some are altogether sold out to the devil. My Lord, how

long will this be. Come out from among them my people and be ye separate and touch not the unclean Thing and I will receive you.

Hallelujah, that means these ungodly secret societies and the sin loving and ungodly churches. I am so glad that God gave me and us the light, let us be true to God regardless of friends or foes.

\* \* \*

Father was out from town about all the time and he enjoyed it very much. The saints have the promise of two new eyes for him. Hallelujah, God will restore his sight if he takes the way with Him. I am staying with . . . . . this winter and don't know where I will be this summer. I am trusting God for my needs and He supplies them, hallelujah. I would not take a farm and settle down on it if some one would give it to me. I would sell it and give it the Lord for the spread of this Firebaptized and dynamited Gospel. We are all well soul and body. It is real heavenly to be at a place where all enmity and strife is gone. Dear Bro. keep true to God and obey as he shows you the way. I would like to know how things are in there now. Are souls getting out in the light or are they still on the old church form . . . I praise Him for heart humility and heart purity . . . I am glad that we don't have to preach these things which are outward, we want to know that the heartwork is done. I am writing the truth and I don't feel a doubt about these and I have the word on my side too.

May the Very God of Peace sanctify you wholly and . . . serve you blameless unto the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is the prayer of your Bro. in Christ. I am saved, sanctified, baptized with fire, and have the dynamite.

Your Bro. in the war.

Kansas built most of her places of worship from 1885 to 1895. The first Church was built in Abilene in 1885. It was struck by lightning and had to be rebuilt in 1892. The Bethel and Zion Churches were built in 1887. The Belle Springs Church was built in 1891 and the Rosebank Church in 1890. Two churches built but no longer used by the Brethren in Christ are Fairview Church in Harvey County in 1895 and Newbern Church in 1893. These Churches with the Brown County Church and the Clay Center Church constitute the Church buildings in the state.

Peter Bert was the first member buried in Kansas. When in 1880 he felt his time on earth was short, he said, "If I drop off lay me in the Livingston Cemetery and let me rest." His children thought it would be nice to start a cemetery near the Bert home. Anna Bert said she would donate the land, so they told father Bert and he seemed well pleased. When he died they laid him to rest in the open field on a corner of a two-acre plot, one acre given for the cemetery and the other acre for a Church building. In 1887 the members in North Dickinson decided to build on the acre of land the present Bethel Church. The neighbours far and near helped to push the work mostly free of charge. The complete building cost less than three thousand dollars and is forty by sixty feet. This is the Church in which the first five dollars was given for foreign mission work by Jacob Stauffer during a general conference session in 1894.

OKLAHOMA. South of Kansas the Brethren in Christ Church developed several congregations in the south central state of Oklahoma. In the early part of the Church's history in Oklahoma, the country was new and mostly all in prairie land. The brethren in Kansas learning of the opportunities in this southern state decided to visit the country with the thought of taking claims. A number of the members decided to move south and they made the trip by covered wagons and horses.

The first member of the Church to move to Oklahoma was Sister Anna Alvis. A few months later, March 1893, a colony of members went, which consisted of Daniel Kraybill and family, D. L. Book and family, G. Switzer and family, and J. R. Eyster. Two years later D. R. Eyster and family moved to the state. From time to time other families moved from Kansas. Among them were Jacob Mellingers, Milton Engles,

John Frymires, the Landis families, Jerry Longs, Jesse Halde-  
mans, and Enos Engles.

It was no small venture to move to Oklahoma by wagons and cross the treacherous rivers and undeveloped country. Homes had to be built, so the new settlers could be sheltered and roads had to be built so they could haul their crops to market. The wide river bed over which the first settlers had to cross had quicksand in unexpected spots. If as much as one wheel of a wagon sank part way in this sand, it was often impossible to pull it out. Big rains would cause the dry river bed to become a torrent of rushing water almost like a wall, sweeping everything in its path and at times making new channels. Some settlers endeavoring to move farming implements over the river bed lost them through flood water after having been stuck in the sand.

The Brethren selected one of the best farming sections in the state for their new homes. Sand storms are not customary here as in some other parts. The railroad companies built long wooden bridges over the rivers, but they were not always strong enough to withstand the flood waters. The first railroad which was built in 1898 was within eighteen miles of where the members first settled. In 1902 two more railroads were built. Only a few miles from the Brethren the town of Thomas sprang up to the settlers' advantage. This made the burdens lighter for the struggling pioneers. A dry goods and grocery store, a blacksmith shop, a tin shop, and a post office had been established about one and one-half miles southwest of the present town site of Thomas before the coming of the railroads. These were all moved to the new town site at the coming of the two railroads.



The expense of settling in a new country and the shortage of crops made the first settlers very poor. This made it necessary for brethren sometimes to leave their families and drive considerable distances to obtain work for which they would be paid cash. The Eyster families tell of a most thrilling experience resulting from going on such a trip to work. By horses and wagon one Autumn they went many miles where there had been a fair corn crop and hired out to husk corn. After some period of labor, they started home with cash in hand. They stopped in the open country to spend the night. The brethren were asleep in the wagon box. One was strangely awakened and felt impressed that they should leave the wagon for the open field. They obeyed the impression which seemed to come as a voice and they stood some distance away. Soon some men came and climbed on the wagon, which could be seen on account of a light they used, but they found no one in the wagon box. The brethren did not venture back to the wagon until the day broke, and as they started home to their wives and children, they thanked God for protecting them from the robbers.

A number of the first settlers lived in dug-out homes. These homes were made by digging out of the side of a hill a space as large as was desired for the home. In this way much less building material was needed to build a home. A roof and front were the most necessary parts. In such structures, the entrance, or door, and the windows for light were all at one end of the large room in which they lived. These homes were quite comfortable and not damp, as would be the case in some sections. This cotton growing country was dry enough that in some cases, at least, the ground was used for the floor of the house. The members could sing and did sing, "A tent or a



cottage, why should I care, they are building a palace for me over there."

In 1897 D. R. Eyster was ordained a minister and ten years later he was made Overseer. He has carried a concern for the work of the Church from that day to this. He has been a help in the community, both financially and spiritually. Brother Eyster, with the assistance of others, pushed out into new fields, driving in covered wagons for many miles over new and untried roads, suffering hardship for the sake of spreading the Gospel. Through his period as Overseer, the Church work has been tided through various experiences. At one time fanaticism and false doctrine threatened the work to the point of a division, but this was avoided.

In 1895, Daniel Kraybill was ordained a deacon. A vacancy was caused by Brother Kraybill's death in 1900, at which time D. L. Book was called to fill the place. By 1908 the membership had grown so that it was advisable to ordain another deacon and the choice fell on James R. Eyster, a man of wisdom and careful consideration for others. When D. L. Book moved to Oregon in 1916, Enos Engle, a son of Jesse Engle, of Kansas, was ordained a deacon. His personal work in a quiet, unassuming manner has been a blessing and encouragement to many.

The first meetings and Sunday School were held in an arbor made of brush with slabs for seats. Later, a dug-out schoolhouse was used for services. After this, for a time they worshipped in the largest dug-out of the members, which usually consisted of one room, used for all purposes. In the year 1897 a tent was purchased in which the meetings were held until the Church was built in 1899. When this small Church building became too small, it was remodeled and en-

larged. This Church is five miles southwest of the town of Thomas.

In the year 1916, Ira Engle was ordained to the ministry. In 1918 he moved about fifty miles west to take charge of a body of people who were organized into a Church, as the result of the labors the winter before of Brother D. R. Eyster and Ira Engle. In 1921 two were added to the ministry. They were P. B. Freisen, and Anna Kraybill. Sister Kraybill was the first woman ordained to the ministry in the Brethren in Christ Church. To 1940, most of the Brotherhood disapproves of women preaching.

The development of the work in Oklahoma has chiefly been the result of revival efforts. In 1901 a revival which extended over a period of seven weeks, was held at Bethany. Many young people and children were saved and some were sanctified. Of the six missionaries who have served in the extension of the Kingdom from the Oklahoma Church, four were saved in this revival. In 1916 a revival was held at Bethel Mission, Leedey, Oklahoma, which resulted in a number of conversions, a number were sanctified, and a number were healed. In 1917 a revival was held which resulted in the addition of forty members to the Church. These are three doctrines which have been stressed in the Oklahoma Church—conversion, sanctification, and divine healing. From the result of the last mentioned revival, a Church was started and sixty-five members have been received since the work commenced. This is the place to which Ira Engle moved as above mentioned.

A visit to the Leedey work was an inspiration. The simplicity and sincerity of worship were not forgotten by one who enjoyed the visit. As the people gathered for worship, mothers would lay their babies on the floor in front of the

audience. Blankets were used to wrap the babies in so they were properly protected. The singing, testifying, and preaching seemed to help the babies to sleep better. This gave the parents freedom to enter whole-heartedly into the service. The singing was from the heart and all seemed to join in the worship. The audience as one great choir lifted their voices in songs of praise and thanksgiving. To preach to these people in the early history of the work was like feeding hungry mouths. The Truth was accepted with joy and a sense of satisfaction. Formal worship has little value compared to the services as witnessed in this part of the Church.

In addition to the local Churches at Bethany, near Thomas, and at Red Star, near Leedey, there have been members at Bridgeport and at Longdale. Regular services were held at these points as well as at two other points where there are no members of the Church. During the years, services were also held at other points, but these have been discontinued. Orphanage work was started in 1900 in the home of A. L. and Annie Eisenhower. This building was turned over to the Church, and is now used for the Jabbok Bible School. These projects are dealt with in later chapters of this book.

ARIZONA. Sometime before 1896, about 1892, a number of families left Kansas for a place farther west. Every page of the experiences through which they passed clings with interest and is surrounded with thrilling episodes both daring and pathetic. In the words of one who passed through the experience we find it put this way: "At times it was up hill, then down hill, then faster and faster, then a halt was called long enough until all proper adjustments were made, then orders were forward march, until instead of having the majestic Rockies for a western boundary, they had them for an

eastern boundary." These brethren, like Abraham of old, felt a call, but did not know just where they would settle. So they departed as they were impressed and after some sojourning in Arizona, they finally reached the great western state of California.

Among those who first moved to Glendale, Arizona, were Henry Byer, Isaac Byer, John Stauffer, Stephen Richardson, and Thomas Franklin, with their families. They came from Brown, Dickinson, and Sedgwick Counties in Kansas. Henry Byer and Stephen Richardson were ordained ministers. Brother Richard like "John," whose surname was "Mark," who departed from Paul and his company at Paphos and returned to Jerusalem, left the company in Arizona and returned to Kansas. There was a Church of the Brethren minister at Glendale, named William Gелlette. So Brother Byer and Brother Gелlette preached alternately every Sunday in a little schoolhouse not far from the town of Glendale.

Other members joined the colony in Arizona and among those who came was C. C. Burkholder. Brother Burkholder was ordained to the ministry at the Zion Church in Kansas, in 1896. It was soon after this that he came to Arizona. The colony were in the midst of a revival when he arrived. Brother Cassel, formerly from Brown County, Kansas, was in charge.

About this same time the Church of the Brethren decided to build a Church house for their services. The Brethren in Christ were asked by the Church of the Brethren to worship with them in the new Church. After careful consideration and prayer it was decided to have separate services. So the members purchased a tent and erected a brush arbor for protection. Even with this protection, quite frequently a heavy storm would blow out the lights. This happened a number of



times when the minister was preaching. The services always went right on. It was testimony or preaching even if it was dark. It was truly holding forth the light of the Gospel in a dark place. These dust storms sometimes lasted fifteen minutes and then it would become perfectly calm and the lights were lit again.

Not long after the revival services referred to above were closed, a missionary preaching tour was planned by Jacob Cassel and C. C. Burkholder. N. T. Franklin offered a team of horses and a wagon for the tour. While arrangements were being made for the tour, many prayers ascended for its success. A canvas covered top was put on the wagon with an inscription on one side: "Get right with God," and on the other side, "Where will you spend eternity?" When all the necessary equipment was provided, the tour began. The farewell scene was most impressive, for there were loved ones and dear companions with children left behind. This sacrifice was made because of a burning love for Arizona's lost.

While a definite land route was not decided for the tour, yet an objective was in mind: it was to preach the Gospel wherever possible. Arizona is largely a desert country and in certain times of the year barren, even in some of the more habitable parts. The workers followed along the rivers where most of the people lived. Schoolhouses were secured for meetings and the number of services depended on how long it seemed advisable to continue. The school buildings were usually small and roughly built, and were boarded upright with boards one inch thick and twelve inches wide. Several mining camps a short distance from the river were visited. At one of these camps, Harquehala, it was impossible to camp, as there was not a plot of ground level enough to keep



the horses and wagon from sliding down the hill. The towns were at times as far as forty and sixty miles apart. Hay, grain, and a barrel for water were hauled on the wagon, for between towns water could rarely be found. On one occasion the supply of water ran out and if it had not been for the kindness of a friend, the party might have perished. The one who proved to be a friend was driving a team for one of the mines and between long distances he had provided water in barrels. He permitted the evangelists to use of this water, and the party felt it was a demonstration of how the Lord helps those who trust Him.

Many a time the Holy Spirit witnessed definitely and sealed the preaching of the Word. The Spirit prompted words of wisdom on trying occasions. Once while the message was being given, a young man kept talking out loud and criticized what the minister was saying. He was a stout, robust young fellow, and interfered considerably. So the minister told this story that he heard had taken place in the East: "A minister after having delivered his message went down the aisle inquiring who wanted to accept Christ. Coming to a certain young man, he asked him to accept Christ as his Saviour, whereupon the youth replied that he did not believe in Christ. The minister kindly informed the youth that he was sorry that such was the case and then said, 'I have no time to waste on you for there are others in the house who want to be saved.'" After this account was related, the preacher in Arizona said, "We have no time for that disturber, for there are people here who want salvation." Almost the whole congregation applauded, and no more was heard of that cowboy. Invariably the congregations were made up of cowboys, miners, and people who did not attend religious services regularly, and often it took

several evenings for them to learn to be quiet. Sometimes they would dash out of the house almost like wild men after the benediction was pronounced.

About three months were spent on this trip and the workers covered approximately nine hundred miles. A number of people received definite help and many others expressed their desire to walk with the Lord. Sometime later Henry Byer and Thomas Franklin and wife made a similar trip in another direction. This trip proved successful in bringing the Gospel to many benighted souls. It was also filled with many thrilling experiences.

The brethren finally decided to build a place of worship. The task was completed in a short time for all had a mind to work. There were two preaching services in the church each Sunday, and a Sunday School and a mid-week prayer meeting. The colony had thirty church members and the Sunday School roll was seventy-five. The ministers took turns in preaching each Sunday at a small settlement fifteen miles west of Glendale, and on their return trip they stopped at a place called the west-end schoolhouse for an evening service. The summers were rather hard on the workers, due to the extreme heat, but the zeal for God urged them on through hardships and trials. Their praise was a fountain of joy and they rejoiced to be counted worthy to help in the great harvest field.

A drought in 1902 caused a complete failure of crops. Even the water supply from the river which was used for irrigation was lacking. It became so serious that the members decided to move to other states. Henry Byer and family moved to Oklahoma and a few years later to Lake Ann, Mich. Other families moved on west to California until finally all the members had left Glendale. The Church house was sold

to the Baptist Church. While the work in Arizona has been abandoned, pleasant reminiscences of the days spent there were indelibly stamped upon the memories of those who had the experience.

CALIFORNIA. The members who moved to California located at Upland. It took a great deal of work to transform this desert land into fruitful groves and vineyards. Many stones had to be gathered and irrigation provided. But the desert was made "to blossom like the rose" and the new location proved to be a good one. While the new settlers were busily engaged in improving the land and building houses, as God's children they did not neglect the worship.

The first services were held in a tent which was dedicated for the purpose. The brethren made a pulpit and seats, and put a floor in the tent. This was used for one year and a half, and then the tent began to rot and become unsatisfactory. A meeting was called which met at Christian Winger's home, to consider the building of a Church. At first it appeared as though the project would fail, but at last the hand of the Lord was seen and faith was inspired until it became a common expression among the members, "By the help of the Lord we are able." The committee appointed to carry out the work consisted of Brother C. Winger, J. B. Leaman, and C. C. Burkholder. A lot was purchased at a desirable part of the town for two hundred sixty dollars. The owner, learning of the purpose for purchasing the lot, deducted sixty dollars. The lot was one hundred ten by one hundred fifty feet, and the size of the building decided on was twenty-four feet by thirty feet. It was also decided not to spend more than eight hundred dollars for the building but the committee, thinking it

should be four feet wider, decided to make the change and be responsible for the additional cost. At first it was decided not to finish the inside until a later date, but due to donations from friends, the Church was all finished at one time. The total cost of the building was fourteen hundred dollars and it was all paid at the time of dedication except one hundred fifty dollars.

The growth of the work soon made it necessary to add additions. Two years and a half from the time it was built, a two-story annex was built to the northwest corner. Several years later it became evident that more room was needed, so a second addition was built, making the building twenty-eight by fifty feet. By 1919 the Church again was found too small, but instead of adding to the old building, or remodeling it, this time a new building was erected. This building is sixty-seven by seventy-six feet with auditorium space forty by fifty feet. The auditorium seats one hundred fifty people, but the total seating capacity including side rooms and gallery, is five hundred. There are sixteen Sunday School rooms so arranged on the sides and end of the auditorium that the classes can pass to and from the rooms with little delay. The building is complete with basement, lavatories, gas, electricity, and hot and cold water. The Sunday School is equipped with blackboards, sand tables, charts, maps, and desks. This Church has a baptistry four feet wide, eight feet long, and three feet deep under the rostrum. There are two dressing rooms, one for the sisters and one for the brethren, so arranged that the applicants for baptism step from the rooms upon the platform. The exterior walls of this building are cream-colored pressed brick, and the roof is supported by four large trusses exposed to inside view. This building was



used by Beulah College for school purposes for a number of years.

C. C. Burkholder was the first minister of the Upland congregation. Thomas Franklin, also a minister, moved to Upland soon after the Church work started. In 1904 J. N. Engle, of Kansas, ordained Brother Burkholder as Overseer and J. B. Leaman as minister. Reverend Henry Byer moved to Upland in 1911 and Reverend Jesse Eyster in 1918. The district ordained Samuel Eyer in 1914 and Peter Wiebe in 1918. Christ Winger, an ordained deacon, moved from Kansas, but on account of failing health, desired not to serve in this capacity. Jacob Haldeman was the first deacon chosen and deacon Isaac Eyer moved into the district in 1908.

Among the many worthy Christians belonging to the Upland district, there are two who stand out on account of their faith and love for the Master, namely, Benjamin M. Byer, and Margaret French. Grandpa Byer as he was known received a definite experience of sanctification when mature in years, and when he would testify he would say: "I am glad I attained this blessed experience in my old age." He was a great blessing to the Church on account of his ringing testimony of victory. To visit this grand old man, as he sat in his yard mending shoes, was indeed a privilege. Margaret French knew nothing of the Brethren in Christ until 1904, the year in which she was marvelously converted. She applied for membership the year the district was organized. She cheerfully left off her pride in dress and put on the plain garb. She was always faithful in attendance and one of the first to testify when opportunity was given. When she spoke, a holy awe settled upon the audience and invariably when she was through, the place was filled with the presence and glory of



God. One Sunday morning on her way to service she passed by one of her neighbors who was digging rocks out of his yard preparatory to seeding. One rock around which he had dug, he was unable to move so he was cursing. Sister French asked the man why he was acting as he was, and said "You are cursing my Christ and it grieves me." She, as with a supernatural power removed the large rock for him, which both astonished the man and also convinced him that God was with her.

The work of the Church developed in other parts of the State. In the Upland District a public school building was bought and remodeled in 1921 at Chino. There is also a Church in Pasadena which was bought in 1927. The work at these points is so closely interwoven with the Upland work that separate consideration is not necessary. Under the leadership of J. H. Wagaman a work is conducted in Tulare County. After the death of Brother C. C. Burkholder, the work at Upland was placed in charge of the same Overseer as Tulare, with a paid pastor to do the preaching. The Church in Tulare was built in 1915 and in 1920 it was moved to Waukena and remodeled. This work has remained small, yet many have been helped in their faith by those who labored here. E. W. Heise, born in 1869, will be remembered for his service as deacon, and Samuel Hough, born in 1848, for his labors in the ministry.

The California Church has from the first been interested in revivals and mission work. The city mission work will be dealt with in a later chapter. It was not uncommon in the Upland Church to give an altar call every Sunday morning and every Sunday evening. J. R. Zook held three series of meetings in the state, with marked success each time. The

Church always appreciated the labors of Brother Zook, especially on account of his definite teaching on sanctification. The California Church through the years has definitely stood for the experience of holiness as a definite work of grace.

## CHAPTER X

### MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES

The growth of a Church body from its origin might be classed as missionary activity, whether it be evangelism, teaching, or preaching. Using missions in this sense, it would be right to say that the Brethren in Christ Church was interested in missions from the time it first started. It is generally considered even before 1780, however, that the early growth of the Church was not strictly missionary activity, but rather, a growth into a Church body by means of faithfully standing for one's belief in the community where the work started. Much of the extension to other parts was due to members moving and this is not classed as missionary activity. Any work, such as entering new fields where the teachings of the Church had not been heard, might be considered mission work, whether it was evangelistic services, or some other form of Church work.

Some claim the Church was interested in Missions as early as 1850. In evidence of this interest trips are sighted in which brethren made visits by horseback, by carriage, and in some instances by walking, to visit the members in other counties and other states. It is claimed that one brother for thirty years made a trip each fall and spring to visit the Canadian members, spending one month each time he went. He did not accept as much as one dollar for any of the visits. Another brother worked all winter at making spindles for spinning wheels and chairs. His son turned the lathe for him, and by

spring the father had made eighty dollars worth of spindles. This early Church father, it is told, put these eighty hard-earned dollars in his pocket, saddled his horse and visited the members, traveling all the way from north of Toronto, Canada, to Pennsylvania. He gave much of the eighty dollars to poor members he visited. This same brother loaned money to early settlers to help them get started in a new land and much of it was never paid back. The grandson of the father, who made the first trips referred to, when old in years made this statement: "I believe they could both say at the end of their journey, as the Apostles did when returning from their first missionary journey, they lacked nothing. All that my grandfather reserved for his support in his old days was the interest on two thousand dollars at six per cent."

It is told that a young man of the Heise relationship walked from the Markham District in Ontario, to Pennsylvania, when twenty-one years of age. He made this trip in 1817, but the purpose of the visit is not recorded. It appears as though this long journey by foot was made to visit the land from which he moved when a lad of nine years of age. Records of other visits from one part of the Church to another are in hand but these are of later date and not earlier than 1875.

Whether these early visits from one part of the Church to another should be classed as mission work might be a question. The giving and the loaning of money to help the poor, as worthy as it was, would come under charity rather than mission work. But the spirit of sacrifice for the purpose of encouraging the work of the Lord, whatever the nature of the work, comes very close to the spirit of actual mission work. It is evident that the first members of the Church had the spirit of missionary work in their hearts but mission work in

its present form was a matter of later development. A general account of the rise and extension of mission work in the Church reveals the proof of this last statement.

Evangelistic services and an interest in mission work started about the same time. The starting of a mission fund was decided upon at a Conference held in 1871. "Conference decided, that the Districts throughout the Church, shall instruct their respective deacons to collect money by voluntary contributions in their Districts, for a general Missionary Fund, to remain unappropriated; subject to the action of the next General Conference" (21). The following year it was decided by General Conference that it is according to Scripture to hold protracted meetings. The General Conference of 1873 decided the following: "Conference decided that the Board of Missions be continued and that the ministering brethren be encouraged to go out into the various sections to preach the Gospel, and it is provided that the money collected throughout the Church be sent to Brother Levi Graybill, at Orrville, Wayne County, Ohio; said money shall be held subject to call. Condition of said fund to be reported annually to General Conference" (21).

From 1871 to the present the Church has had a mission fund and properly qualified persons to care for this phase of Church work. In 1874 the Church decided that ministers sent out to preach shall be considered missionaries. It was further decided to select ten or twelve ministers annually from which the Mission Board could draw as the need required. The first board consisted of three members, namely, Abraham Stoner, of Greentown, Ohio; Jacob E. Stouffer of Canton, Ohio, and Jos. Davidson, of Martinsburg, Ohio.



The first treasurer of mission funds was Levi Graybill of Orrville, Ohio. Brother Graybill was not a member of the board and he had charge of the funds of both United States and Canada. In 1890 the Church decided to enlarge the mission work of the Brethren in Christ, and a committee of twelve brethren were appointed to serve during life, providing their conduct was in keeping with the standards of the brotherhood. Their main duty was to report fields of labor and workers to the Board of Missions. The second treasurer was Abraham Stoner, and the third treasurer was Saxton Bowers. As early as 1886 Canada had a separate mission treasurer, who made regular reports to Conference.

In 1895 Peter Steckley, B. F. Hoover, and Jacob E. Stauffer were appointed as a mission board for a period of five years. It was in 1894 at a General Conference, held at Bethel, that Brother Stauffer gave the first five dollars for foreign mission work. As early as 1889 there were home mission points, but it was not until 1897 that candidates presented themselves for foreign work. The first to present themselves were Brother and Sister Jesse Engle, and Alice Heise, all of Kansas. The General Conference of 1904 put the mission work on a more permanent basis by organizing two boards—one for Home Mission work and one for Foreign Mission work. The Home Board consisted of George Detwiler, Chairman; Isaac Swalm, Assistant Chairman; Saxton Bowers, Treasurer. The Foreign Board were J. R. Zook, Chairman; A. M. Engle, Assistant Chairman; Peter M. Climenhaga, Treasurer, and Eli M. Engle, Secretary. Besides this the Church was divided into territories with individuals appointed in each part to promote missionary activity and giving of means for the cause. The Home Board made twelve territorial

divisions and the Foreign Board made seven divisions. From this date Mission work has been one of the most outstanding activities of the Brotherhood.

**EVANGELISTIC SERVICES.** Evangelistic meetings are one of the outstanding phases of mission work. It is interesting to note that both the home and foreign mission work of the Church developed as revival efforts grew. We will note some of the largest revivals during the years that interest in missions was growing rapidly and the date of some of the first revival efforts in different districts. We are using the term revival efforts as series of meetings of at least one service a day for a period of time. At first some of these series of services lasted only three or five days. The average length in Pennsylvania has been a two weeks' period. In other parts of the Church, revival meetings or protracted meetings, as they were sometimes called, lasted from four to six weeks. There were periods of revivals in the early Church without protracted meetings, and the presence of an Evangelist. Lancaster County had several such revivals and these were explained in Chapter three, and the dates are 1863 and 1886. One of the largest revivals in the Air Hill district was of this type. This revival was held in 1870. The services were in the homes and there were not less than forty converts. The largest revival the Bertie district ever had was in 1875. It started without any effort on the part of the Church, except the regular services. It started at Sherkstown and spread throughout the whole district. No evangelist was engaged, and the membership continued to increase from the results of this revival for several years after. There were one hundred three baptized in Lake Erie in one year. This is the largest Church addition reported by any one district for one calendar year.

1875 is the year evangelistic services of the series type with an evangelist took place. One was held in the Chambers Hill Church, near Hummelstown, Pennsylvania, and one in the Chestnut Grove meeting-house, near Mansfield, Ohio, with Henry Davidson as evangelist. About 1880 a revival was held in the Greenwood Church near Yale, Michigan. Jacob E Mishler held the first revival effort in the Fairview Church, Ohio. In 1882 a revival was held at Wainfleet, Ontario, and in Ohio in 1881. In 1884 one was held in a schoolhouse near the present Bethel Church in Kansas. Noah Zook held a meeting in the Belle Springs Church in 1885 with good results. About this same year Christian Brubaker held a revival in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, for a period of ten days in a wheelwright shop at Hatfield. In 1878 another revival broke out at Fairview, Ohio, which lasted almost two months. It started when a young man was remarkably saved while employed as a farm helper in the home of A. M. Engle. His burden of sin became so great that he could scarcely eat, sleep, or work. In 1897 there was a revival at Hummelstown, Pennsylvania, with thirty converts, one at Mastersonville, conducted by the home ministers, with forty converts, one at the Union Ridge schoolhouse in Oklahoma, and about this same time one was held at Air Hill, with thirty-six converts. In 1890 the Not-tawa district in Canada held a revival at the Sixth Line Church. Noah Zook held three evening services at Guilford in 1875 which resulted in five converts and in 1889 John Smith, from Ohio, held the first two weeks' revival at the same Church. The largest revival in Bucks County was held by Noah Zook in 1897. Mansfield, Ohio, had a revival in 1896, which resulted in fifty converts and forty-seven joined the Church. At Mastersonville, Pennsylvania, a revival was held in 1897, which resulted in forty converts.

My readers will be interested in the account of revivals in the Church, as told by Jacob N. Martin, of Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania. About 1886 was the first revival he remembered. Noah Myers, from Franklin County, came to Brother Martin's home for a prayer meeting. After the meeting he offered to stay a week or two to visit, if some one would go with him. A brother consented, and they visited from house to house and one evening they held a meeting in a school-house. David Heisey reported in this service that he made a start at home the night before. The brethren continued meetings in different homes, holding three or four such services a week. This continued for about seven weeks, and the result was about fifty converts. These services were not all held in the homes of the members. From this time on, the home ministry held services from time to time, but Noah Zook was the first evangelist who came about 1895. Brother Martin stated that quite often folks would make a start in the regular services. He remembered of four or five young people starting to serve the Lord in a Sunday evening service, and on another occasion, six started in the weekly prayer meeting.

Two of the outstanding evangelists in the Church were Noah Zook and J. R. Zook. Here is a brief account of revival efforts as given by Sister Mary Zook, Brother Noah's wife. She stated that as far back as she could remember, there was a minister here and there who felt the need of going on evangelistic tours. They would go from Pennsylvania to Ohio and to Canada on horseback, and stay at each place a short time. Later on, brethren would go on evangelistic trips, spending months at a time in Canada, Michigan, Virginia, and other places. Noah Zook and T. A. Long spent six months in Michigan, holding special services. Evangelists in those days



labored for very little compensation. About 1894 Brother and Sister Zook were appointed by the Church to go out in tabernacle work. They did this type of work two seasons, five months at a time. This meant much to Sister Zook, a mother of eight children, and it placed a great deal of responsibility on the oldest daughter, as she had to care for the family in the mother's absence.

The Church selected helpers to go with Brother and Sister Zook. The first year Sister Susan Hoffman and Sister Katie Hershey accompanied them. Brother Zook did all the preaching, except occasionally, a minister would take his place. The second year the workers were the same as the first year, with the addition of Reverend George Detwiler. Many of the services were held in towns and cities and the Lord blessed their labors and gave them souls who stood true to the end. As a rule, the workers held two services a day, and three services on Sunday. This was the first Tabernacle work in the Church, and being new, some spoke reproachfully of the work.

At the end of two periods of tabernacle work, Brother Zook was led to go out into Evangelistic work and give all his time in this capacity. He felt Sister Zook should go with him. She said that this meant more to her than going out in Tabernacle work for a few months each year. This meant the forsaking of family and home, and all that was dear to them by natural ties. Brother Zook felt especially called to awaken the Church on the need of Holiness, mission work both home and foreign, the privilege of divine healing, and the message of the second coming of Christ. The main message in the Church to this time was, as stated in an earlier chapter, the importance of being saved and separated from the world. Brother and Sister Zook spent twelve years in the work and the Lord



blessed it and gave them many precious souls. Sister Zook, in her last days said, "Some of those saved are now in foreign fields, thank God!" At the end of twelve years they were completely worn out and went to live with one of their daughters.

During the four years Brother and Sister Zook lived with their daughter and her husband, they went out on short evangelistic trips, holding a few weeks' meeting at a place. The last service was in the Abilene Church in Kansas, where Brother Zook's health gave way completely, and in two months from the time he preached his last sermon, his funeral sermon was preached from the same stand. Sister Zook said her husband's last years were filled with earnest faithful labor for the Master, and she felt that he would have a glorious reward. Sister Zook, who will long be remembered for her prayers and testimonies, said when seventy-eight years old, "Since that time (referring to their labors) many others have been called and gone forth in home missionary work and in foreign missions and in City missions and much good has been accomplished." The graves of these pioneer workers can be seen in the Zion Cemetery near Abilene, Kansas, and their pictures can be seen at Messiah Bible College.

**BEGINNING OF FOREIGN WORK.** From this consecrated home of Brother and Sister Noah Zook came four missionaries to the foreign field: David W. Zook, who spent several years in Japan, and from there went to India in 1898; Eber Zook arrived in India the same year and after two years of service passed to his reward; Sara Zook Cress, who with her husband reached Africa in 1899, but after a very short period of service passed to her reward in 1900; Rhoda Zook Martin, the wife of Josiah Martin. She and her husband died

in India with notes of rejoicing on their lips. On December 31, 1907, and January 1, 1908, Rhoda wrote to her parents concerning her husband's death, and on January 17, 1908, Rhoda departed this life. Josiah a short time before his death said, "This is my desire, going to meet my Lord from the jungles of India." No one should miss reading "The Missionary's Letter to her Parents," as it is called, by Rhoda to Brother and Sister Noah Zook; "The Missionaries' Home-Going," a brief history and song by Herbert Buffum; "Evangelist and Memoir Five," by J. A. Climenhaga, printed in the *Evangelical Visitor*, December 3, 1934.

Some of the answers given by different districts to a question concerning the first missionary meeting in their local Church, and the first missionary offering are of interest. In a few cases missionary meetings and offerings were reported earlier than these listed. In such cases it was done to encourage those the congregation had faith for, yet working under other boards. Only enough dates and places are given to show the time that the Brethren in Christ in general became missionary conscious in a public way. The first missionary meeting held in the Michigan Church was in 1897, and the Canadian Church and many of the churches in Pennsylvania report that this is the first year in which public offerings were taken for mission work. Some churches in Kansas, Ohio, and Pennsylvania lifted offerings for mission work earlier than 1897, but it was not until the first missionaries were going to Africa under the Brethren that public missionary offerings became a permanent part of Church work and worship. From this date to the present the brotherhood, considering the size of the membership, has done nobly in this field of Christian endeavor. When the Brethren in Christ

support all phases of Church activity as well as they have supported missions since 1900, a new day will have dawned for the work of the Church in general.

A complete account of the mission work of the Church would perhaps more than fill several volumes the size of this general history of the Brotherhood. Space will not permit in this brief chapter to go into detail concerning the development and changes of the work from the beginning to the present. In addition to H. Frances Davidson's book which gives a record of fifteen years of labor among primitive peoples, it is hoped that in the near future a complete history of both Home and Foreign mission work of the Church will be made available for schools, members in general, and other interested friends.

The first missionary group of the Church who left for a foreign field was approved by General Conference of 1897. The candidates were Brother and Sister Jesse Engle, of Kansas, H. Frances Davidson, and Alice Heise of the same state. Due to the early awakening in Kansas along revival and missionary lines, it was only natural for the first members consecrating to this service, that they should come from this middle-west state. They sailed the same year on November 24, 1897. Their call was to South Africa, but as to what part of this large country they would seek to evangelize was unknown to them. They felt the call of God and ventured in His name to this land which they knew not. The party had no serious difficulty in booking for the voyage and starting on their long journey over the watery deep.

Much time was spent on their journey talking over and praying concerning their future work in Africa. It was on their minds continually and various suggestions were made. Brother Engle being fifty-nine years old, was concerned about

learning the language and he finally came to the conclusion that he might serve in helping other people if he could not speak to the natives. Sister Davidson from the first to the end of her work on the field wanted to go to the most unevangelized tribes. She preferred parts where no white people lived, and natives who had never heard of Christ. The other two members of the party were resigned to whatever work the Lord would lead them, revealing no preference for place or special concern as to how it would turn out. As much knowledge as possible was gained from passengers on the boat as to the nature of the country to which they were going. From knowledge received and through prayer, the party felt led to go to the part of Rhodesia known as Matabeleland.

The party arrived at Capetown the day after Christmas, and looked immediately for a place to live until they would learn more about the country and make plans for the starting of the work. A Miss Rees, a secretary of the Young Women's Christian Association, made the party acquainted with a Mrs. Lewis, a splendid lady of Capetown. She provided the missionaries a place to stay and through her kindness they were made quite comfortable. Mr. and Mrs. Lewis and other people in Capetown became quite interested in the party, especially their different way of dressing attracted their attention. Everyone took an interest in the group and aided them in learning more about Matabeleland. The choice of this land appeared to be a good one and the Matopo Hills were especially recommended as a good location for a Mission. This hill section is high enough to make it rather a healthful place to live in comparison with many other parts of the country. Another point in favor of this country was the absence of other missionaries.



Rhodesia is a part of South Africa taken over by the British in 1889. It was named after John Cecil Rhodes, who was Chairman of the British South African Company. This territory is divided into Northern and Southern Rhodesia. The province of Matabeleland is in Southern Rhodesia, a section of 149,000 square miles, including the province of Mashonaland. Since 1897 this country has enjoyed peace which is in great contrast to the customary rebellions preceding this date. The native population of Southern Rhodesia is less than 800,000 and the white population was around 25,000 a few years back, but has been rapidly growing. This country is noted for its coal, copper, silver and gold, and the land produces quite well. The principal towns are Bulawayo, Salisbury, and Hartley.

While the party were in Capetown, Brother Engle went to see John Cecil Rhodes, the founder of the Rhodes Scholarship in Oxford University for students from the British colonies and several other countries. He owned a controlling part of the noted Kimberley diamond mines, and conducted the campaign against the natives, procuring the land for the British. Rhodes was much interested in building a railroad from the Cape to Cairo from one end of Africa to the other. Rhodes gave Brother Engle a letter to the government of Rhodesia, advising the giving of a piece of land to the missionaries. Rhodes, having had much trouble with the natives rebelling, said, "Missionaries are better than policemen, and cheaper."

The missionaries remained in Capetown until May 1, 1898 on account of the rainy season, which made it inadvisable to go North sooner. They reached Bulawayo May 4th. This was a frontier town only two years old, with a population of around one thousand white people. The cost of living in



Bulawayo was high, especially at the Hotel, so the party contacted a Mr. Newman, whom Mrs. Lewis suggested, and sent along a letter of introduction to him. Mr. Newman was leaving Bulawayo in two weeks, and had already sold his home. He had the party stay with him the two weeks, after which they moved into their tent which had arrived in the meantime. The party were without furniture and had to use boxes and other equipment at hand for beds and other needs. It took two months before the exact mission site was chosen, so this required living in the tent at Bulawayo for six weeks.

The Matopo Hills, the site selected for the mission station, is thirty miles from Bulawayo. If it would not have been for the kindness of a Mr. Anderson, of the Adventist's Mission, it would have cost one hundred dollars to take the party and their belongings to the Mission site. Mr. Anderson took them for half that amount and they left Bulawayo the evening of July 4th in a wagon drawn by eighteen donkeys. The site was reached in the morning after they had traveled three nights and two days. The party was met by the native chief and welcomed to the Matopo Hills. The chief called together the head men of the kraals and told them that these people were not like other white people, but came to teach them and to do them good. The tent was pitched in the highest part of the valley and here the party were left alone with God and the natives. Many of these natives had never heard of the name God, and the party not knowing the language, could not converse with them, but the Word was read to the few who assembled the first Sunday, but no comments were made.

The missionaries now turned their attention to building mud huts, and all of them helped in the work. As soon as these were completed the tent was vacated for Church and

school work. The first day of school fifteen pupils were present, and, while anxious to learn, they did not understand that it would take months of study even to learn to read. The almost nude children the missionaries were anxious to clothe, so a sewing school was started next. In 1899 the first ten members were received into the Church and were baptized.

April 1899, other helpers came from the homeland to strengthen the mission force. The new party consisted of Brother and Sister G. S. Cress, and Isaac O. Lehman. More huts were needed, so the new workers assisted in building them, including a mud building for Church and school purposes. Then, in the fall of 1899, Brother and Sister Cress felt led to start a new station not far from Matopo. It was not until spring that they moved to their new location, and the rains came and made the ground very damp. They built their hut and were enjoying the work, when suddenly Sister Cress took seriously ill and on February 8th, she left this world. Brother Engle took sick in March, and he passed away April 3rd, 1900. Doors were taken from the buildings for lumber to build a coffin for Brother Engle. Parts of dresses were used to drape it. Sister Davidson and Brother Cress spoke at the funeral service. In July the bereaved wife of Reverend Engle, and the bereaved husband of Sister Zook Cress left for America. This left the work in charge of Brother and Sister Isaac O. Lehman. The next workers who came were Levi Doner and Emma Long. Following them came H. P. Steigerwald and wife, who arrived November, 1901. Under the leadership of Brother Steigerwald, the work continued to prosper, and by 1903 the school enrollment was seventy-three in number.

By 1905 a number of boys were at the Mission; the new

Church was almost completed, and the school enrollment reached one hundred and was continuing to grow. Brother Steigerwald was a man who could vision the needs of the work from every angle, and nothing was neglected. He and his wife served as missionaries in Africa for twenty-eight years. He was Superintendent of the work, including all the stations. He opened the Wanezi Mission. He is buried beneath African soil, a privilege which some missionaries are not permitted, but desire.

In 1904 Brother and Sister John Myers visited the mission field. This couple were missionaries at heart, and served for a time in home mission work. They enjoyed so much seeing the work as it was carried on among the natives. If they would have been younger, they would have given themselves to foreign work. It seems fitting that the home in which they lived at Grantham long before the Messiah Bible College was in existence, is now the present Missionary Home for returned missionaries. The old buildings have been replaced by new ones, but the location is sacred to our memories.

## CHAPTER XI

### MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES, Continued

The mission work of the Church in India had its inception at the General Conference of 1904, which was held at Stayner, Ontario. Brother and Sister Amos L. Musser, Henry Angeny, and Maggie Landis, were confirmed as foreign mission workers. These workers sailed from New York on the sixth day of December, 1904, arriving at Bombay, India, January sixth, 1905. They went to the D. W. Zook mission station, where they remained until January 20th, at which date they left for Arrah Shababad District. They remained here only a short time and then went to Lucknow in the United Provinces. Brother Angeny did not continue with the Brethren in Christ Church after reaching India. The Mussers remained in India until 1912, and most of the time was given to Christian work in the vicinity of Lucknow. One great difficulty which these workers encountered was the learning of the language. Another great handicap was the lack of funds to establish a permanent work properly. Along with their work for the Master, they spent some time in manual labor to help support themselves. They used every available opportunity to spread the Gospel message and many were helped. Both the natives and other missionaries had great respect for these workers.

In 1913 a new group of workers responded to the call of the India Mission field. The party consisted of Brother and Sister Henry L. Smith, and Sister Effie Rohrer. In 1916 three

more workers joined the group, namely, Brother and Sister David E. Rohrer, and Ruth Byer. The Smiths and Sister Byer were at the Saharsa Mission and their address was Bhagalpur District, B. and N. Ry., India. David E. Rohrer and wife were at the Supaul Mission, Supaul, B. and W. Ry., India, and Sister Effie Rohrer was at Madhipura Mission, Dauran Madhipura, B. and W. Ry., India. Brother Smith was very zealous for the work and pleaded for money and workers to extend the work.

Brother Smith in his report to the conference of 1918 made his plea in these words:

With three Mission Stations and work for four missionaries at each Station, we are at present in need of a corps of half a dozen new missionaries. Single sisters are needed for work in the Zenanas, married men are needed for building purposes, and for conducting religious services, and for carrying on interior evangelistic tours . . . . We are in definite need of two brothers and their wives and several unmarried sisters. May these be forthcoming (21).

This plea was soon answered, and in 1919 the India Missionary force was strengthened in the persons of Brother and Sister Clarence Heise, Brother and Sister Amos D. M. Dick, Ella Gayman, and Anna Steckley.

The work in India was growing under the leadership of Brother Smith, but after eleven short years of service on the field, he was suddenly called to his reward. He was our first missionary to be buried in that far-off land across the ocean. Brother Smith was a splendid student, graduating from Elizabethtown College in 1908. These lines, written by him as an introduction to the class song and poem he wrote might well be a fitting statement to his work on the mission field:



For years through the heat and cold, favorable and unfavorable conditions of life, we have been struggling, ever with the aim to reach that point of vantage from whence we could catch a glimpse and full import of the great future. Is it not a pure joy that causes the overflow of hearts, in the consciousness of having more fully developed that God-given power—the Mind. But who can refrain from feeling sorrowful at the thought of separation, after years of harmonious cooperation in one great work. But we remember that He is near, and we are glad.<sup>1</sup>

Brother Smith is remembered as a teacher at Messiah Bible College, a minister, a missionary, and as author of the book, "Bible Doctrine," written while home on furlough, and published in 1921. In a copy of this publication, given to your author, Brother Smith inscribed with his own hand these words: "From fellow Church friend and brother." Why one so young and useful was so soon taken is not for us to answer. His mantle fell on Brother Amos D. M. Dick, who is faithfully superintending the work.

CONCLUDING SUMMARY OF FOREIGN WORK. A detailed discussion of the foreign mission work is not necessary, due to the continued acquaintance with the work through the *Evangelical Visitor* and the *Handbook of Missions*, published each year. Therefore only a glimpse of the work in general is given.

India has continued to have three active stations through the years, until 1924, when the station at Madhipura was closed, and the work was taken over by the other stations. The work in general consists of evangelistic work among the poor and starving, educational work, orphanage work, teaching, preaching, medical care, and visiting by the workers.

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1. Henry L. Smith, Class Song and Poem, Class 1908, Elizabethtown College.

The work in Africa continued to grow, and new workers were added. Sallie Kreider went to the field in 1904, and gave many years of valuable service. Brother and Sister Harvey Frey went in 1905. Brother Frey will be remembered for his splendid service in visiting the native preachers and encouraging them in their work. The same year Ada (Engle) Taylor and Abbie (Bert) Winger went to the field. Myron Taylor went in 1907. Brother Taylor was a great friend of the natives, and lost his life in attempting to free them from lions, which were making trouble. He was a good hunter, and was fatally injured by a lion when he attempted to kill it with a borrowed gun which did not work properly. In 1908 Brother and Sister Jesse Wenger, Elizabeth (Engle) Steckley, and Mary Heisey went to Africa. In 1911 Cora Alvis, Sadie Book, Lewis Steckley, and Walter O. Winger, joined the forces. In 1913, Hannah Baker and A. C. Winger went to the field. Brother and Sister Harvey Lady sailed in 1919. After a short period of service, Brother Lady died as the result of an accident. Brother and Sister Lester Myers, and Beulah Musser sailed in 1920, and Brother and Sister John A. Climenhaga, and Annie Winger sailed in 1921. From 1921 to 1940, many more workers have gone to the foreign field.

In 1918 the African field had four stations—Matopo, Mt-shabezi, Macha, and Johannesburg, and eleven workers. In 1921, there were four stations, the same as before, except instead of Johannesburg, there was the Sikalongo Mission, and the total corps of workers was twenty-one, with three home on furlough. In 1939, there were five stations, the same as in 1921, with the addition of Wanezi, and there were twenty-eight workers on the field, and a number home on furlough.

Over eighty workers have gone to the foreign mission fields. Approximately one-fourth of these went to India, and three-fourths went to Africa. The offerings for the work gradually increased from less than five hundred dollars in 1896, to over five thousand in 1910, twenty thousand in 1918, and over twenty-five thousand in 1931.

J. N. Engle and John Sheets will be remembered for their visit to the mission fields in 1909. J. R. Zook was much interested in foreign work and was chairman of the Foreign Mission Board for a period of years. Peter M. Climenhaga is remembered for his many years of service as treasurer of the Board. He wrote many letters in answer to funds received, and to the missionaries. He faithfully protected the funds, and whenever any money was on hand, he kept it invested and obtained interest to enlarge the amount for mission work. C. N. Hostetter, Sr. and D. W. Heise will be remembered for their trip to the mission fields in 1921. Brother Hostetter will especially be remembered for his many years of service as Chairman of the Board. Irvin W. Musser will long be remembered for his years of service as Secretary of the Board, and for his carefully caring for the duties involved.

**CITY MISSIONS.** Home Mission work, growing out of the spirit of evangelism as given, took on a new interest for the Church, when City Missions were opened at a number of points. Some city mission stations, after a time of serving in this capacity, were made into Districts, or taken over by Districts. In 1918 the City Missions were Buffalo Mission, Des Moines Mission, Chicago Mission, Dayton Mission. In 1919, Philadelphia and Chambersburg were added to the list of City Missions. In 1939, Altoona, Detroit, Harrisburg, Wel-

land, Buffalo, Chicago, Dayton, Philadelphia, and San Francisco were the city missions of the Church. Through the years, rural missions developed, and by 1939, the stations in operation were Canoe Creek and Stowe, in Pennsylvania; Houghton and North Star, in Canada; Mount Carmel and Oak Grove, in Michigan; and Fairview, Garlin, and Home Evangel in Kentucky. A more recent development is that of the mission pastorates, and in 1939, the location of these pastorates were Blandberg, Clear Creek, Rays Cove, Rainesburg, Granville, Saxton, Sherman Valley, Riddlesburg, and Waynesboro, all in Pennsylvania. The rest were scattered in five states, one at Franklin Corners, Illinois; one at Clay Center, Kansas; one at Orlando, Florida; one at Sylvatus, Virginia, and one at Valley Chapel, Canton, Ohio.

The two oldest home mission stations are Chicago and Des Moines. They were started in 1894. The Chicago work was started by Sister Sarah H. Bert, and Brother Abram L. Myers. The work has changed location four times, each time moving to a larger place. The work was started by house to house visitation, and on the opening day, six children and eight adults came to the services. The first change in location was made at the end of two and one-half years of mission work, and it was on account of the station being too small. The Sunday School enrollment gradually increased to two hundred and twenty-five members. Due to many changes in City Mission work, these stations act more as lighthouses, rather than recruiting stations for large memberships. Many souls receive light and help, who do not join in full membership, and the attendance is much larger than the actual membership. Those who join the Church come by ones and twos, and often from homes where they have had to bear much persecu-



tion for joining this religious faith. Some of the most striking converts of the Chicago Mission were some who were on their way to commit suicide and through hearing the singing came into the Mission and were saved. Some of these have been true to the end, and two were ordained to the ministry.

The work is rather strenuous, on account of the heavy program, and many opportunities to help those in need. The work is varied, as visitation, caring for the poor, sitting up at night with the sick, caring for outcast mothers, helping to clean up homes, along with the cares and responsibilities of the Mission station itself. On Sunday, there is Sunday School, preaching service in the forenoon and evening, Children's Meeting and Prayer Service in the afternoon, and a Young People's Meeting and song service on the street in the early part of the evening. Through the week, the Mission holds a Tuesday evening service, a Junior Bible class on Wednesday, on Thursday afternoon a Women's meeting, and in the evening, song service, on Friday a Cottage Prayer Meeting, and on Saturday, a Street Meeting.

The Des Moines Mission work was started by Charles Good and Dr. C. Nysewander. The work was turned over to the Brethren in Christ Church in 1894, at which time J. R. Zook was placed in charge. With the exception of one year, Brother and Sister Zook cared for the work until his death, in 1919. The work has passed through a variety of experiences, some encouraging and others discouraging. For many years there was the home in which the workers lived, the Gospel Temple, and a Mission Hall in a needy part of the city. At times a tent was used instead of a hall, and services were held every night. This was Brother Zook's great training school, and the many sermons required of him helped to make him



one of the most powerful preachers the Church has had.

In 1916 a Mission Hall with eight living apartments, all in one large building, was erected. The hope was that the rent from these apartments would finance the work, and thus make it self-supporting. The city, at a later date, wanted the land on which this building was built, and thus the plan was spoiled. Another investment was made with the money, but it did not prove successful. This proved to be a lesson to the Church to be careful in the matter of entering into business as a method of supporting Church work.

Much good has been accomplished at Des Moines, and many souls have heard the full Gospel message. Not only those who joined the Church in full membership received help, but others received definite help as well. The workers held services in different parts of the city, either in tents, homes, or other places provided. Some were saved, some sanctified, and some healed. The Church also cooperates with other meetings in the city each year, spiritual groups who hold a large camp meeting. The workers have been greatly respected, both by the business men of the city, and other Church leaders. One Christian of another denomination said there would be no lodges if all professed Christians would care for others as the Brethren in Christ people do at Des Moines.

The third city mission to open was Buffalo Mission in 1898. This work was started by one of Canada's greatest evangelists, J. W. Hoover, who for a time stirred audiences with his tender appeals to accept Christ. D. V. Heise did a great deal to encourage this work, and at first, Sister Mary (Doner) Brenner assisted Brother and Sister Hoover in the

work. The Mission has had an encouraging growth through the years, and has been well cared for by efficient workers. Twenty-five Hawley Street, Buffalo, New York, will for many years remain a sacred spot to members of the Brethren in Christ, and other friends of the Mission.

The Philadelphia and Lancaster missions both started in 1902. Peter Stover started the work in Philadelphia by holding cottage prayer meetings wherever he could find an open door. The first workers would carry chairs on their backs or under their arms from one place of meeting to another. For many years the work has been permanently located at 3423 North Second Street. This Mission has a long history all its own worth writing. A few of the many names of those connected with the work through the years are S. G. Engle, Wilbur Snider, and Clyde Shirk. This station has been a lighthouse to many in this City of Brotherly Love, as it is called.

The work in Lancaster, now a part of the Manor-Pequea District, had a background of Orphanage work which is given in a later chapter. The mission work had its start when Daniel Kautz opened his home at 132 Nevin Street for Sunday School and preaching services. In 1907, when Brother Kautz died, the Sunday School closed for a time, but the Church service was continued in a rented hall until the Church purchased a mission station. In 1907, Brother and Sister Enos H. Hess, and Ada M. Hess, took charge of the work. In 1910 A. R. Good and wife became the workers. This mission is noted for a period of time as having the second largest Sunday School enrollment in the Church. Many names and events are worthy of mention and will be included if the complete history of this work is ever written.

The San Francisco Mission was started in January 1911,

at 608 Pacific Street, in a basement under a saloon, in the section of the city, known as the Barbary Coast, or Red Light district. This street was traversed by men of both poor and wealthy classes, ranging in age from boys to aged grey-haired men. Usually on Saturday and Sunday nights, the midnight open air services were held. Many times two or three services in one night were held on different streets, often starting about ten o'clock and continuing until midnight. Convicted souls would often come into the Mission Hall and pray through to victory. The station, because of necessity, or advisability, has moved a number of times, and in 1942 is located at 832 Kearney Street. This station has followed the custom of placing Scripture verses on the doorway, and the name, "Life Line Gospel Mission," attractively painted. Above the doorway the station has used a sign which was swung out during the evening meetings, which was of circular shape like a drum, with the name in large white letters, and an electric light on both sides, so that those a block away could easily see the location.

The work was started by the Upland Church, and, for a time, was financed by this Church. Brother C. C. Burkholder was general Overseer for many years. Reverend N. T. Franklin took a special interest in this mission and gave considerable time helping in the work. Many workers have been located at this station, some for long periods, and others for very short periods. Elizabeth Winger gave seven years of active service. The respect for this work under the leadership of Maggie E. Sollenberger reached the extent that the United Railroad Street Car Company granted the Sister Workers free transportation on all their lines in the city.

Other names which will go down in history as pioneers in

starting mission stations are Denny and Marie Jennings, who started Bethel Mission in Virginia in 1917. In 1919, land was purchased and a house and Chapel were erected. Herman G. and Laura Miller started the Altoona Mission about 1920. W. H. and Susie Boyer started the Dayton Mission in 1912. The Chapel at Dayton was built in 1916. The State Mission Board, and the South Dayton District were working for about fifteen years to effect a work in the city of Dayton, but obtained no results until 1912, due to no one being available to start the work before this date. William and Willa Lewis started God's Love Mission at Detroit, in 1938. The Welland Mission was an outgrowth of a Sunday School, started in 1919, by the Bertie and Wainfleet Churches. The actual mission started in 1920, with Brother and Sister W. B. Duxbury in charge. Brother and Sister Levi B. Schell, a couple of outstanding Christian piety and meekness, gave a number of years of valuable service to this work. The Zion Mission of Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, which is now a part of the Air Hill District, was started in the home of Brother and Sister A. O. Wenger, and they were the workers. The work at Arcadia and Sebring, Florida, which took on activity to the extent of building a Church in 1926, was the result of tent meetings, and some members moving to these parts from the North. Center County Mission work has been carried on for many years. Brother and Sister Samuel Lady will be remembered for their many years of service at Mooretown, Michigan. The Gladwin Church was built in 1925, under the direction of the Home Mission Board. The work at Iron Springs started in 1922, through the efforts of students from Messiah Bible College. Many have participated in the regular services and revivals, to encourage this work. A former schoolhouse was turned into a Church. The services well at-



tended, and happy Christians in the valley are the results of the labors.

**RURAL MISSIONS.** The many tent meetings under the Home Mission Board and State Boards and Districts have resulted in openings for rural missions and mission pastorates. A long list of workers have helped to make these meetings a blessing to many communities. The far-reaching effect of these tent meetings for good will never be fully known. Communities and other denominations have been lifted to a higher spiritual plane through individuals attending these tent services. The Home Mission Board has not only been active in encouraging tent campaigns, but much credit is due them for the encouragement given to individuals who felt called to such work. M. G. Engle, Abner Martin, and C. N. Hostetter, Jr., will go down in history as leaders in this worthy extension work of the Church. The rural mission work in Kentucky, and a consideration of the revival which started the development which resulted in new mission pastorates in Pennsylvania will complete the discussion on mission work.

The Kentucky mission field is one of the most active in the home mission work of the Church. A visit to this field will never be forgotten. Kentucky is a beautiful country and noted for its blue grass sections and for its rolling lands. The mission work is in a rolling country where clear streams run over rock-bottom beds and springs are found on hillsides. The people come from good stock, many going west from Georgia. A number of the tent meetings on some nights have had an attendance of a thousand people. Large baptismal scenes, Sunday Schools, preaching services, prayer meetings, Vacation Bible Schools, visiting the well and sick, nursing, marrying the sons and daughters, and burying the loved ones who fall



asleep are all a part of the work. Many of the services have been held in schoolhouses until in recent years a number of churches have been built. The Grassy Springs Church was built in 1939. The other churches are at Robinson Ridge, named "Home Evangel Church", due to its location at Home Evangel, "Fairview Church," and a church named "Beulah Chapel" built in 1942 at Vester, not far from Garlin.

The beginning of this Kentucky work dates back to 1919 when an evangelistic group, with M. L. Dohner as preacher went to Garlin to hold a tent meeting. Previous to this, Walter Reighard had visited some relatives in Kentucky. Anna Hoover felt called to mission work in the South. These being interested, presented the matter to the Home Mission Board. J. N. Hoover, Walter Reighard, and M. L. Dohner made a trip, inquiring as they passed through the country concerning the spiritual welfare of the people. When they reached Columbia, a courteous gentleman introduced them to a man who told them of neglected places.

When they left Columbia, they went toward Garlin. This section was new to all the brethren, but they had a feeling this might be the place God would have the Church hold a tent meeting. They looked at other places, but returned to Garlin. The party had planned to look further the next day, but all had a feeling that further search was not necessary, as Garlin seemed like a good opening and a needy field. They were told at Garlin that "if there is a place on earth that a meeting is needed it is here." The people they met said they seldom go to Church, as there was no Church convenient, and they did not want to go to town to Church. On the third Sunday of the first meeting, hundreds were present, having come by walking, horse-back, buggies, wagons, and a few automobiles.

There are many openings for services in the Kentucky field which cannot be filled. An account of the second tent meeting revealed the spirit the workers have found. On Sunday afternoon on the last day of the first campaign, a gentleman near sixty came to Brother Dohner at the dismissal of the afternoon service and took his hand, and with tears, said, when asked if he was a Christian, "I am ashamed that I am not saved," and continued, "I wish you would come to White Oak, and give us a meeting. We need it, and need it badly." Brother Dohner was greatly affected to have an unsaved man plead for a revival meeting. The tent was pitched there next, and there are souls still living and faithful to the Church as a result of this service.

Walter Reighard was the first minister to be stationed at Garlin. Permanent fruits of his labors remain evident. After a period of service, he felt it was best to leave the field for other work. He left after eight years had passed from the time of the first revival. The work was then without a resident pastor for two years. Brother and Sister Albert H. Engle answered a personal call to this field. The work had suffered in the absence of a pastor, but great credit is due several sisters, who, without much earthly encouragement, remained true to the Church they had joined. The Engles and the many who have helped in the work since they went to Kentucky in 1927 will be long remembered for what they have done to build a work which reaches many souls.

Besides the churches mentioned, there are three homes owned by the Church, and used by the workers. The home at Garlin was purchased in 1927, and remodeled. The homes at Robinson Ridge and Fairview were built new. From these homes and churches and the places of worship is radiated an

influence for righteousness which has the respect of the people in town and country for many miles distant. During the conference year of 1938-1939, there were two hundred nine professions, fifty-four were baptized, and twenty-one joined in Church fellowship. The corps of workers in this same year made one thousand two hundred visits, and had prayer in each home. Over one thousand three hundred services were held, including all the meetings in charge of the workers in one year.

The more recent development of Church work in Pennsylvania which resulted in a number of Mission Pastorates, dates back to 1931, when a young man came from Saxton to Salemville to see Roscoe K. Ebersole. He heard that Brother Ebersole prayed for the sick, and he wanted to be prayed for. This young man, with another gentleman who came for help, invited Roscoe K. Ebersole and Brother Fink to come to Saxton and help in a meeting. These services proved a blessing, and later, services were held Sunday evenings on a porch near where the Church is at present. The people gathered in the yard and listened to the singing, testifying, and preaching, and a number were saved.

Brother Ebersole was saved in the Altoona Mission, and he felt a call to Christian work. He left his work, for which he was receiving a good salary, and followed his leadings. The Ebersoles sold considerable of their furniture, keeping only that which they actually needed. They bought an old schoolhouse, and divided the room with curtains, using one end for living quarters, and the other end for services. This is the work they were doing when the call came from Saxton.

The next services were held in a woods, about twenty-five miles from Salemville. The place had been used as a picnic

ground. The services were held under a shelter which had a roof, but no sides. At first the services were held once a week, but when the revival broke out, they were held every night for five weeks. The workers sold some of their chickens to have money to buy gas to go back and forth from their home to the place of meeting. Some one suggested one night that these people are doing this work all free, and they ought to be helped. From this time on, the workers received help. When the woods meeting first started, so few came, which made it look like a foolish undertaking. Later on, hundreds of people came, some in trucks, and many walked, both old and young. Some came to mock and laugh, but often remained to weep and pray. The weather was becoming colder, so it was necessary to provide heat. Steel barrels were used, which resulted in plenty of smoke along with the heat. Finally, it was decided to continue the services in a Grangers Hall, near Saxton. This hall was so packed with people that one night, as Brother Miller was preaching, he had no room to move in any direction. The people, being so close together, could not even see those who testified, except one man, who could not get into the Hall, so stood on a car and testified in a window. During the altar service, one soul after another prayed through to victory. One night a young man became enraged, in that his mother was seeking the Lord, and he threatened to burn down the Hall. The next morning the building was in ashes, but who started the fire, was not known. The altar was full of seekers the night before, and some returned the next day to get help. A ring service was held around the place where the building had been.

Some people from Ground-Hog-Valley had been attending the services, and this proved to be an open door to continue



the work. At the same time, services were continued at Saxton, in the homes of converts. An Elder in the Church of God gave his garage for services at the new location. The workers lived in two rooms above the garage. The first floor, partly below the ground level, was used for services. A man who gave lumber to make seats, earlier had threatened to take his wife away from the altar when she was seeking the Lord. Many helpful meetings were held in this garage, but it was rather damp, and soon became too small. When it would rain, the water would have to be dipped off the floor with basins. A lot was bought and on the fourth of July, 1932, the foundation was started for a cement block Church. Fifty-one souls were baptized and forty-seven of them united with the Church.

Brother Fink held several revivals during this development, one at Cipher, and one at Rays Cove. These revivals, with meetings four nights a week at Saxton, one night a week at Corney, and one night a week at Ground-Hog-Valley, with the household duties and helping others, kept the workers more than busy. At times they were almost too tired to rest, yet, the services had to be cared for. The men were helping to build the Church, but through it all, they rejoiced in that souls were being saved and filled with the Spirit.

In the fall of 1932 a revival was held at Rays Cove. The services were held in a Church, called the Mountain Chapel. Services were being held in the Chapel, but very few people attended them. At first, no one asked the workers home for the night, so they stayed in the Church. The night was spent trying to sleep, attempting to keep warm, and praying. The workers obtained a few things to eat, and did the best they could. After much sacrifice and prayer, a real revival broke



out, and the seekers rushed to the altar. The seekers were so hungry and sincere that no one needed to talk to them about their souls, in fact, they would pray instead of listen. Great transformations took place, and many were helped. These services lasted about nine weeks, and almost one hundred were at the altar.

In 1933, the Finks, Dodsons, Ebersoles, and Ross Morningstar started a meeting in the grove at the Clark's schoolhouse about six miles southeast of Everett. From the very first, these meetings were well attended. There was no roof over the seating place, so many of the people stayed in their cars. This type of meeting was new in the community, and many came out of curiosity. As people started going through with the Lord, others endeavored to stop the work by using dynamite. One night, a charge that was put off spread dust and dirt over the grounds. This opposition did not keep the people away, and a number were saved. The owner of the grove thought the meeting should stop, due to the opposition, so it was closed after about fifty were saved, and twelve seekers were still at the altar.

In answer to prayer, the workers obtained an old Church which they rented. After the owners refused to rent the Church any longer, it was decided to purchase it and the means were provided to pay for it. A Sunday School was opened, which had an average attendance of seventy-five. In November of 1933, eighteen were baptized and nineteen were taken into Church fellowship. The first love feast was held December 16, and fifty communicants commemorated our Lord's death and suffering.

These descriptions of mission work in the form of revivals must suffice for this account. My reader is encouraged to

read the yearly Handbook of Missions, and the Evangelical Visitor, to keep in touch with the development of missions in the Brethren in Christ Church. Your author is conscious of the fact that much valuable information on missions has not been given, but as stated before in this chapter, this must be left for later publications. Many who have done excellent work in the fields of evangelism and missions have not been mentioned, but there is a record which keeps all accounts straight, and from this record each individual, whether he be a foreign missionary, a home missionary, an evangelist, a pastor, a Sunday School worker, or one who gives and prays for the work, will be rewarded according to the deeds done, and according to the spirit in which it was done. History has proved that one can be a prominent Church worker and yet be more interested in self than one whose name or service has never been heralded abroad. This statement should not be taken as an insinuation that names mentioned in this account are guilty of vanity. A careful, detailed study of the mission work of the Church will convince anyone that the cause has prospered, due mostly to individual effort, at great sacrifice, and with one end in view, which was to glorify God through reaching souls.

Many would like to see greater Church extension, and some of these have felt the Church is not putting forth enough effort to build up the work at home. From history we find that Church extension to a large extent has been the result of individual consecration to the task of extending the Kingdom in hearts, and not with the thought of gaining members. The additions to Church membership have been the result of retaining a vision of lost souls to be reached for the Master. The field for mission work is just as open as ever, and in-

dividuals with a glow and vision are continuing to work. The records prove that the Brethren in Christ Church, through her Mission Boards and through the Districts, has stood back of those who have gone forth. Desired fields have not always been opened to the individual, but at times the best field of service has been overlooked. The reward is going to the worker who is using the opportunity at hand, instead of waiting for a field which may never open.

## CHAPTER XII

### INSTITUTIONS OF LEARNING

In this division are considered Sunday School work, Publication work, Colleges, Bible Schools, Vacation Bible Schools, Young People's Meetings, and Youth Conferences.

A fair picture of the growth of the Sunday School work in the Brethren in Christ Church is obtained by comparing the dates of the starting of a number of schools. Some of the members attended union Sunday Schools in communities in which they lived until the Church was ready to start schools of her own. Due to the Church holding services for so long a time without meeting-houses, it is difficult to be certain which districts would have been willing to start Sunday Schools first. The Church never objected to religious teaching, but this work was left for the ministers, and the home. The Sunday School movement started about the same time that the Brethren in Christ Church began. But Sunday Schools made very little progress in the Brethren in Christ Church until one hundred years later.

The Bertie District in Ontario cooperated in a Sunday School which started in the Humberstone Schoolhouse in 1863, and when the Church was built in 1875, Sunday School was held from the first. The brethren from Sippo, Ohio, claim that they started Sunday School work about the same time, but no exact date is given. The first Sunday School in Kansas started in Abilene, in 1885. In 1887, three Sunday

Schools were started, one at Bethel, Kansas, one at Zion, Kansas, and one at Fairview, Ohio. About 1888 a school was started in a schoolhouse in Michigan. In 1889 the first school in Lancaster County was started at Conoy. In 1891 one was started in the Nottawa District, Ontario. The next schools to start were Belle Springs Sunday School in Kansas, in 1892; Silverdale Sunday School in Pennsylvania, in 1893; a brush arbor Sunday School, in Oklahoma, in 1894; and the same year the Fairland Sunday School, in Pennsylvania. In 1902 a school was started at Gratersford, Pennsylvania, and in 1904 one was started in Clark County, Ohio. In 1907 schools were started at New Guilford and at Air Hill, Pennsylvania. In 1910 three schools started in Rapho District, Pennsylvania, and in 1912, one started at Five Forks, Pennsylvania. With this partial picture, a number of schools purposely left out, it will be of interest to note the effort it took to start some of these schools.

At Bertie, Ontario, the members proceeded slowly and prayerfully, but with determination, and great care was taken not to offend the older members who were fearful of the results. There was very little opposition manifested at Clarence Center, New York, and the organization was effected without much ceremony. At Bethel, Kansas, it took quite an effort, as a number of members were undecided, being fearful of taking a wrong step. Sunday Schools were starting all around them, and many of the young people were being drawn to these. This made the members ready to decide in favor of a school. When the question arose at Bell Springs, Kansas, there was considerable opposition on the part of some members. The question was warmly discussed in a number of Church councils. When it was finally permitted, it was



conducted in the afternoon, and was not attended by many of the members of the Church. However, the work grew rapidly in interest, and soon the school was overcrowded. At Nottawa, Charles Baker was engaged in Sunday School work with another denomination from the time of his conversion. In 1890 a revival broke out in the community, and a number of the converts identified themselves with the Brethren. Some of these converts requested Brother Baker to help start a Sunday School for the Brethren in Christ, which he gladly consented to do.

In Pennsylvania considerable effort was necessary to start Sunday Schools. Some members refused to attend, and even to 1940 a few continue this practice, due to being opposed to the movement. Some schools at first were held only in the summer. In the Ringgold district the first Sunday School was a traveling school. Brother H. C. Shank was instrumental in getting such a school started. It was opposed by some, but in less than two years, three permanent schools were established. By a traveling school is meant that the school was held in connection with the regular preaching service, which was conducted one Sunday at one Church, the next Sunday at another Church, and so on around, at four different places. In Rapho district the question was under consideration for a number of years, but after being considered in council, it was carried on first vote to have schools. At Hummelstown, there was careful consideration for a number of years, and finally, the question was taken to General Conference. When once started, it became a strong school, and for a time it was one of the best schools in Pennsylvania.

There is an interesting account of the difficulty in starting Sunday School work in the New Guilford district. The older

brethren and the three Overseers of South Franklin were not in favor of this new movement in the Church, so the matter was presented to the council for consideration, but the Overseers did not let the question come up. Those interested dropped the matter for two years, and then presented it again, but the Overseers took the same stand as before, but finally thought they had better let council consider the question. When the vote was taken as to how many were in favor, most of the members were on the side of the school, to the surprise of some. The Overseers were so grieved at this that the matter was privately postponed for a year longer. At the end of a year of waiting, no one made a move toward the fulfillment of the decision that the council had made. The Sundays were passing by and finally the aged overseer, with a sad countenance, talked over the matter with one of the interested brethren to inquire why the school was not started. The Overseer received this mild reply: "We do not wish to grieve the older Brethren." Later the Overseer asked again why the work was not started, but this time with a smile. He wanted the decision of Council carried out, even if he, individually, could not see it that way. He requested the work to be started, but he did not want any part in the matter. His request was granted, but he was invited to attend. The work which was started prospered, and has been a blessing to the Church.

The first action taken by General Conference in relation to Sunday School work was at Shannon, Carroll County, Illinois, in 1885. It was decided that the new movement should be conducted carefully and prayerfully, and only the pure Word of God should be taught. Picnics and celebrations of any kind were not allowed. At the Conference in Abilene, Kansas, in 1909, the first Sunday School Board was appoint-

ed. They were Henry K. Kreider, Chairman, C. O. Musser, Secretary, and Thomas S. Dohner, Treasurer. In 1918, it was decided at the Conference, held at Nappanee, Indiana, that each school should be represented in the Sunday School Convention by a delegate. In 1920, it was decided that the Secretary of the Board should have his fare paid to Conference out of the Sunday School funds. In 1920 a Sunday School standard was adopted at the Upland, California, Conference. The standard was Teacher Training, Teachers' Meetings, Definite Decisions for Christ, Missionary Instruction, Missionary Offerings, Temperance Instruction, Home Department, Cradle Roll, Delegate to General Conference, Contribution to General Conference Fund, Systematic Records, and Systematic Reports.

Outstanding changes by General Conference in relation to Sunday School work include a number of items. In 1937 the number of the board was increased to five members. In 1938 the final approval of the revised standards was given. An important note was sounded, stating that standards are not ends in themselves, but means to an end. One important item was left out of the revised standards, namely, records and reports. This has been passed over more or less lightly in many schools, but where rightly administered, great improvement was the result. The secretaries' work has not been given its full place, considering its importance. In many cases, the number absent has not been reported, and the reason for the absence not considered. Several outstanding improvements were made in the revision. Stress is laid on the actual teaching of the Bible and doctrines of the Church. The Church has not neglected this, but the weakness has been the poor pedagogical methods used in teaching. The recognition given to

teacher training is making a marked improvement on this line. The other improvements are the stress laid on reaching the possible constituency and the importance of the promotion of education and of other Church activities.

A great improvement in Sunday School work has been the result of the Teacher's Training Course, given by the Extension department of Messiah Bible College. Hundreds of copies of the text, written by Enos N. Engle and John A. Climenhaga have been sold. Most of these have been used by students who have taken home study work, or who have been members of teacher training community classes. Your author was appointed by Conference to take charge of teacher training in 1920, at which time J. A. Climenhaga gave up the work on account of going to the mission field. Almost three hundred students have been graduated and have received the certificate. In 1935 the Extension Department introduced the Evangelical Teacher Training Courses, and to date a number of students have taken the Preliminary Training Courses and over twenty have completed the requirements for the Evangelical Teacher Training diploma. Beulah College and the Ontario Bible School have recently arranged to teach the Evangelical Training Courses, and are now doing excellent work in this field.

Sunday School conventions have had a gradual growth in the Church to the present. In many cases the work was taken up at a joint convention of two or three phases of Church work. Some of these conventions have been called Ministerial Meetings, Bible Conferences, or Sunday School Meetings. They were not strictly conventions at first, but rather all-day meetings, dealing with some phase of Bible study, ministerial duties, or Sunday School work. A meeting of



this type was held at Springfield, Ohio, in 1900, and the same year one was held at Belle Springs, Kansas. Ohio started conferences in connection with their annual state council in 1909, and this plan has spread throughout the Brotherhood. A few years later such a meeting was held at the Fairland Church, in Pennsylvania. The work grew, and in 1913 Air Hill had its first meeting of this kind. In 1914 Mowersville held one, in 1915 there was one in Michigan, and one in Bucks County, Pennsylvania; in 1918 there were two such services in Rapho District, and in 1920 one was held at Ringgold, Maryland. The first Sunday School Convention was held at Nottawa, in 1920. In more recent years, as an outgrowth of the all-day meetings of a conference type, actual conventions have started. The State of Pennsylvania holds an annual convention, with delegates present representing the Sunday Schools of the State. There is also an annual convention held each year in connection with General Conference, under the direction of the Sunday School Board.

The growth in Sunday School work is evident from these figures. In 1917 the Church had seventy-seven schools, and in 1938 one hundred and thirty-three schools. The total enrollment in 1917 was 6,652, and the total enrollment in 1938 was 12,171. The total offerings in 1917 were \$13,698.96, and the total offerings in 1938 were \$38,351.74. The enrollment is almost double, and the offerings almost three times as much. The membership of the Church has not grown so rapidly but the work of the Church and her influence has had a great growth, and the Sunday School is one of the growing institutions.

A list of names of those who have been active in promoting Sunday School work would be long indeed. Reverend Wil-



liam Page served as secretary of the General Board for many years. J. H. Martin deserves much credit for developing a delegation system for the Pennsylvania State Convention. Some of the first Sunday School superintendents in the various districts ought to be remembered. Moses Brechbill, Mowersville; Solomon Wingert, Air Hill; David Wenger, Mt. Rock; J. K. Forney, Belle Springs; David Brechbill, Bethel; Jacob H. Moer, Silverdale; Jacob K. Bowers, Gratersford; Asa Bearss, Bertie; Jacob N. Martin, Conoy; Boyd Brown, Clinton County; David Martin and D. V. Heise, Clarence Center; Ambros Miller, Fairview, Ohio; J. D. Books, Fairland; Samuel E. Brehm, Hummelstown; Laban Climenhaga, Kindersley; Benjamin S. Brubaker, Mastersonville; Samuel Whisler, Mansfield; Humphrey Scott, Michigan; Amos Wolgemuth, Mt. Pleasant; Charles Baker, Nottawa; Noah Sollenberger, New Guilford; Aaron B. Nichols, Oklahoma; Harvey C. Wingert, Five Forks; Joshua Groff, Sippos; John Reichard, Waterloo; and Dan Wagaman, Zion.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOLS. Vacation Bible Schools were started for the purpose of bringing Christian training to youth during the summer when they are not engaged in regular school activity work. Three sections of the Brethren in Christ Church took up this work in 1929. Brother and Sister Albert Engle held one in Kentucky the last part of April, and the first part of May, 1929. The children were much interested in this school, and Vacation Bible Schools became a regular part of the Church work. Later in the summer of 1929, C. N. Hostetter Jr., and Sister Hostetter, with other helpers, held a school at Refton, Pennsylvania. This has been a large school each summer. Classes meet in several churches, so as to have room for all who attend. The same summer

that these schools were held in Kentucky and at Refton, the Grantham District started a Vacation Bible School. This is also a regular feature of the work at Grantham. The work has been successful under the leadership of Mary E. Hoffman.

Other parts of the Church have taken up the work since 1929. Very successful schools have been conducted in Virginia. Children come from many different homes, and it is more or less a community proposition. This getting together and studying the Word of God and other helpful materials are of great profit to the youth. Young people from Pennsylvania and Ohio have helped in the schools held in Virginia. This work provides an opportunity to make many new contacts in the community. Many children who have not been reached through the Sunday School have been brought under Christian training through the Vacation Bible School.

**CHURCH PUBLICATIONS.** The publication work of the Church is given under institutions of learning as it is a dispersion of knowledge along many different lines. A number were thinking of the benefits of a Church paper, but the matter was not presented to Conference until 1874. There was considerable sentiment against such a publication, but the question was kept alive by holding the idea over for consideration at the next conference. When the issue came to the floor of conference in 1875, the opposition side was greater than those in favor, so the matter was postponed indefinitely. It is necessary to keep in mind that the postponing was not necessarily due to a lack of interest in religious printed matter for the Church. It is true, there was a strong sentiment that the Bible was all the reading material needed, and to some degree this attitude still remains in the Church. The

Church has always been extremely careful, on the point of financing. This entered into the decision to postpone having a Church publication for general distribution, as it was certain that the subscription price would not care for all the expense.

In 1880 the question again came to General Conference for consideration, and resolutions looking towards establishing a Church paper were adopted. The matter was presented to various districts for consideration, and action as to adoption or rejection. The main thoughts for consideration by the districts were the inconvenience and disadvantage of not having a paper and the advisability of having a publishing board to be responsible for the financial and editorial work involved in such a publication. When the districts reported at the next conference, fourteen were against it, nine in favor, with Michigan, Illinois, and the state of Kansas not having reported. After a discussion of the matter, the proposition was deferred, and did not come up for consideration until six years later, at the conference of 1887. The Church of Michigan petitioned this conference to reconsider the resolutions which were before the conference of 1880. This conference decided to give the paper a trial for a period of four years, after which another vote of the congregations and districts was to decide as to its continuance or discontinuance.

A committee of five was appointed to execute the work. They organized, and elected Henry Davidson of White Pigeon, Michigan, as editor. These brethren named the periodical "Evangelical Visitor." This name is considered most satisfactory today. The other four members of this committee were Daniel Heise, of Clarence Center, New York, S. E. Graybill, Martinsville, Pennsylvania, W. O. Baker, Louisville, Ohio, and Samuel Zook, Abilene, Kansas. The first number of the Visitor is dated August 1, 1887. This

issue was sent out free as a sample copy to the members of the Church. This gave the people an idea of the paper to which they were asked to subscribe. It was published with the purpose of spreading evangelical truths, and the promotion of true, practical piety among all classes. The paper soon found friends with believers of other faiths. The printing was done by the Mennonite Publishing House, of Elkhart, Indiana. T. A. Long, and W. O. Baker wrote two of the articles in the first copy on "Our Work," and "Conditions of Effectual Prayer." By 1889 the circulation reached two thousand, and it was suggested that donations be received to place copies of the Visitor in hotels, reading rooms, infirmaries, trains, and news stands.

At the General Conference of 1891, held at Mastersonville, Pennsylvania, the question of continuing the paper was decided. Reverend T. A. Long is given credit for keeping quite a number of the home district from voting by an oratorical appeal for its continuance, so that a favorable decision was gained by only a small majority. Conservative sections of the Church would at times crush moves from other parts, and this was what was feared, but the paper was saved to continue on its mission.

The next major move in relation to the publishing work was a request for the Church to own its own press. It was decided if four thousand dollars could be raised, that a press could be bought. The first effort to obtain this amount failed, so the proposition was dropped for a time. When this effort was being made, the paper was being printed in Abilene, Kansas. The Conference of 1896 made Henry N. Engle, the son of Jesse Engle, our missionary to Africa, editor of the paper. Brother Engle gave his services without a salary, but conference on two occasions gave him donations as tokens of good



will for his work. Brother Engle's religious views changed during this period as editor. He contacted literature and persons of a cult whose beliefs were directly opposite that of the Brethren in Christ. His gradual acceptance of views of this cult made a change in editorship not only advisable, but necessary. Conference of 1899 accepted Henry N. Engle's resignation, and appointed Samuel Zook as editor. In October, 1899, George Detwiler, of Ontario, Canada, became connected with the publication office; in 1900 Conference appointed him as editor in charge, which position he faithfully executed until January, 1918.

A brief account of some of these editors will interest the reader. Henry R. Davidson was born in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, April 15, 1823. He was of Scotch ancestry; his grandfather, Robert Davidson, a Presbyterian minister, emigrated to this country from Scotland in 1789. Jacob Davidson, the father of Henry, was a minister in the Brethren in Christ Church. Henry was converted early in life, and became a minister, and later an Overseer. He lived part of his life in Pennsylvania, then Ohio, Michigan, Kansas, and back to Pennsylvania as steward of Messiah Rescue and Benevolent Home. Brother Davidson was one of the first to agitate the question of having a Church paper. He was faithful in promoting all phases of Church work, and served on the Foreign Mission Board. He passed to his reward March 17, 1903, and was laid to rest at Wooster, Ohio.

The other one we shall notice is George Detwiler, who was born January 6, 1847, near the village of Roseville, in North Dumfries township, Waterloo County, Upper Canada, later called the province of Ontario. He prepared for school teaching and taught several years. He was reared a Mennonite



and became acquainted with the Brethren in Christ through nursing Benjamin Hallman, and by this met two daughters of Isaac E. Tyson, of Royersford, Pennsylvania, who, on a visit to Canada, called at the Hallman home. One of these daughters became his wife, and they lived in Berlin, now called Kitchener. He finally joined the Church in which his wife was reared. He was active in Sunday School work before moving to Sherkstown, Ontario, as well as after moving. After moving to Bertie, he was placed in the ministry. He was also a teacher of singing classes. He, in these offices as well as superintendent of the Sunday School for a time, stands out as one of the Bertie Church's outstanding leaders of the past. His dignity, kindness, and fine Christian character won for him many friends. Through his example, his unsaved neighbor was saved. He assisted as one of the evangelists in one of the greatest revivals ever held in the Bertie Church. He served as editor seventeen years, and later as a teacher at Messiah Bible College for six years, and a part-time teacher another year. He was fearful of any modern interpretation of the Bible. His pupils were strengthened in their belief in God, in Christ, and the Word.

The Conference of 1902 decided to move the place of publishing the paper from Abilene, Kansas, to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The publication in Harrisburg began the winter of 1903. Some years later, about 1913, the printing was done at Grantham, and continued there until it was moved to Indiana. Vernon L. Stump was made editor in 1917, and Nappanee, Indiana, became the place of publication. The reason for the change in editor was that Brother Detwiler did not fully fall in line with the teaching of sanctification as a definite work of grace, as was expected of ministers from 1910 on, the date that Conference accepted sanctification as

a doctrine of the Church. The work of editor was heavier from 1909 on, due to the extra work of overseeing the publication of Sunday School quarterlies and Sunday School papers, but Brother Detwiler was physically able to care for the work. He made a great sacrifice to care for the work, in that he had to leave his family for a time. He finally sold his farm at Sherkston, Ontario, and made several major moves for the sake of the work, first to Kansas, then to Pennsylvania; and he worked through the years at a very low wage.

The growth of the work since 1917 has been considerable. Before this date, the Church did not have a publishing house. In 1926, a fire proof building of brick and tile construction, sixty-four feet by ninety-six feet was completed. The volume of business has gradually increased, until in 1935 the gross volume of business was thirty-five thousand dollars. The Mennonite Publishing House at Scottdale, Pennsylvania, has continued for many years to print the Church's Sunday School supplies with the assistance of a supervising editor from the Brethren in Christ Church. Some of the work at present, besides printing the Church periodicals, consists of printing books, hymnals, advertising circulars, catalogues, stationery, and school catalogues. From 1925 to 1935, there were sent out approximately 550,000 Visitors, 1,778,000 Youth's Visitors, 1,144,000 Sunbeams, and 1,500,000 Tracts. The approximate number of quarterlies and leaflets sent out per year by 1935 were 4,000 Teacher's Quarterlies, 1,400 Junior Teachers Quarterlies, 25,200 Advanced Quarterlies, 3,980 Primary Quarterlies, 9,840 Junior-Intermediate Quarterlies, and 3,600 Leaflets. Much credit for the success of the work in recent years in addition to the Editor and worthy staffs is due the Publication Board, and especially the Chairman, Orville B. Ulery, Springfield, Ohio.

## CHAPTER XIII

### COLLEGES AND BIBLE SCHOOLS

The Messiah Bible College, under which name a Bible College, a Junior College, and a Secondary School are conducted, implies a Christian emphasis. This emphasis implies that other aims in education are made secondary to this more fundamental aim. This should not be interpreted that worthy educational aims are missing. The College believes that the Bible, history, and all other available literature handed down by the Church, must be made a vital part of the student's source material for study. This survey of both secular and religious history and literature gives the student the opportunity to think for himself in the light of all the facts. The College functions on the principle that when religion is separated from higher education, one of the greatest interests and needs of the human race is neglected. This neglect throws open wide the door for some other philosophy of life to dominate the thinking of man. Christianity has been tested and tried. Both nations and individuals have been elevated to the highest planes of living through the standards of Christianity. Christian education only asks that the Christian faith be given a fair chance to prove its lasting worth.

In Christian education the teacher and curriculum are of great importance. The teacher must be well trained and possess a Christian personality. This type of teacher will impart and guide the student in his intellectual pursuits. The outlook will be as broad as the interests of the human race.

But, on the other hand, the Christian teacher will not indoc-trinate the pupil with some narrow, biased view in some non-religious field of his particular fancy. The program of studies of Messiah Bible College includes the Social Sciences, Science, Fine Arts, and the Humanities which include Religion. But, whatever the changing patterns of life experiences are, there remains a changeless demand by all men. The great teacher, Jesus Christ, taught not only by imitation, but by sharing his life with his pupils. He did more than this, He died on the cross for the sins of the world, and thus met that changeless demand.

These last two paragraphs are in brief your author's opinion why Messiah Bible College was developed from a Bible School to a College, and in general terms, what the College stands for as an educational institution. The early fathers of the Brethren in Christ Church believed in education, but the need for secondary and college training was not as apparent as today. But there was a need then, which continues to the present, and that is a knowledge of the Bible. The Bible has always been taught by the Church, but gradually the training has become more systematic through definite courses of study being set up. At first it was taught in the home, at the family altar, and in the religious services. The next development was the Sunday School, which has been related. Over one hundred years after the Church started, in 1883 there was interest expressed concerning the starting of a Church school. Several situations brought on this interest. The one was the gradual change in dropping out all religious training in the schools of the state, and the other was the need for more efficiently trained Church workers who would hold the respect of the youth of the Church and leaders of other faiths. J. R.



Zook, of Des Moines, Iowa, was agitating the idea of a Bible School, in which Bible and Music would be taught to prepare those interested for Church work at home and for Foreign Mission work. The idea was first considered in a general conference, held at Stevensville, Ontario, Canada. Later, at a conference of the Church, held near Canton, Ohio, in 1897, the question of the advisability of establishing a Church School, to be called Missionary Training Home, was considered. The idea of a school was growing in the Church, but it was not until the year 1904 that a committee of seven was appointed to consider the matter carefully and report to the next conference. This next conference was held at Smithville, Ohio, May, 1905. The committee reported in favor of starting a school, but the report was rejected by conference.

The interest in a school continued to grow, however, and in 1909 the Messiah Bible College was founded in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The main purpose claimed for starting the school was to train workers for the mission fields of the Church. The school was launched under the name, Messiah Bible School and Missionary Training Home. In 1911, the school was moved from Harrisburg to Grantham, Pennsylvania. The present Administration Building was constructed at that time. The school soon grew to the extent that a change of name became desirable and necessary. Consequently, in 1924, it was rechartered under the name of Messiah Bible College. This name is more in accord with the courses offered. For a number of years, Christian Training courses, Secondary training and four years of Liberal Arts work were offered. At the present time the work consists of a Secondary School, a Junior College, and a Bible College course.

The present location is eleven miles from Harrisburg, the



capital city of Pennsylvania, and twenty-seven miles from Gettysburg. The state highway from Harrisburg to Gettysburg passes within a short distance of the village of Grantham. Grantham is located in the Cumberland Valley, which is famous for its beauty and fertility.

The campus consists of twenty acres of land which slopes gradually toward the clear, sparkling Minnemingo stream, named by the state, Yellow Breeches. Approximately one-half of the campus was purchased when the work moved to Grantham from the S. R. Smith Company, and the other half was purchased in 1930 from A. W. and Anna Elizabeth Climenhaga. On the campus there are six buildings composing the school plant. The Administration Building is the oldest. It contains the administration offices, class rooms, library, and dormitories. The other buildings are Lawn Annex, Hill View, College Home, Science Laboratory, Auditorium-Gymnasium, and the Industrial Arts Building.

Lawn Annex was built soon after 1915, by Clarence E. Snoke, for a private home. This building was purchased by the College in 1919, and changed into a dormitory and one apartment. Hill View was built by S. R. Smith about 1911 for a private home, and was purchased by the College in 1921 and changed into apartments and music studios. The present Laboratory Building was built in 1914 for a preparatory school. This building was taken over by the College in 1925, and was used as a gymnasium until 1935, at which date it was remodeled for laboratory purposes. The College Home was purchased in 1935 from E. H. Hess. The Auditorium-Gymnasium was built in 1935, on the land purchased in 1930. The Musser Memorial Industrial Arts Building was built in 1940.

The college has been co-educational from its beginning. The largest enrollment in one school year, 1939-1940, including short term students and students taking one or more subjects was one hundred sixty-eight. A large number of students have transferred to other colleges at the end of two years and three years of college work since 1920. Many of the students have entered the various professions—as many as usually enter the professions from the average American college. But many more students than is usually the average of other colleges go into Christian service. To 1939, eighty-two former students entered the ministry, fifty-three became foreign missionaries, and fifty-one served in Home Mission work. Eighty-three former students were teachers, twenty-nine became nurses, and five practicing physicians. These numbers include all former students, some of whom were not graduates.

An annual Bible Conference was started during the school year of 1910-'11, which has continued to the present. It was held the first year at the Messiah Home, on Bailey Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, now the location of the Lighthouse Mission. The S. R. Smith residence at 46 North Twelfth Street, was used as needed both for the school and the conference. The main speakers at this first conference were J. N. Engle, Abilene, Kansas; S. G. Engle, Philadelphia; Eli M. Engle, Mt. Joy, Pennsylvania; George Detwiler, Harrisburg, and C. N. Hostetter, Sr., Washington Boro, Pennsylvania. For a number of years the conference lasted ten days, but in more recent years it is held for a period of four days.

A complete history of the College, including administration, staff, changes, students and successes of alumni would fill several volumes. Only a few names can be given in this

brief history. S. R. Smith served as President from the beginning to 1916. Enos H. Hess served as Vice President from the beginning to 1922, and as President from 1922 to 1934. C. N. Hostetter, Sr. was the second President of the College, but served only in the capacity of an advisor. He did not live on the campus during the years he held this office from 1917 to 1922. C. N. Hostetter, Jr., became President in 1934. J. A. Climenhaga was the first Registrar, and served in this capacity from 1916-1919. A. W. Climenhaga was the first Dean of the College, and has served in this office since 1928. He has served the College from 1912 to the present, in such offices as teacher, registrar, director of extension work, religious director, and dean. The first principal of the academy was A. H. Brechbill, who served from 1925-1927. The first business manager was J. E. Brechbill, who served from 1928 to the present. The first preceptor, which office is now known as Dean of Men, was P. J. Wiebe. The first preceptress, which office is now known as the Dean of Women, was Edna Booser. L. O. Musser and S. Calvin Eshelman each served a number of years as President of the Board of Trustees. Clara E. Hoffman served the work from 1912-1942, in such positions as teacher, Preceptress, and Librarian. Most of the leaders of the other three schools of the Church were former students of Messiah Bible College. Dr. P. J. Wiebe has served at all four Church schools.

**BEULAH COLLEGE.** Beulah College was in existence fifteen years before moving to the permanent location on the corner of West Arrow Highway and San Antonio Avenue, Up-land, California. From 1920 to the school year 1935-1936 the work was conducted in the Church auditorium and Sunday School class rooms, with several private homes used for dor-

mitories. This building was no longer adequate to care for the work of a growing institution, but it will be remembered as the original home of the College.

Christian C. Burkholder is considered the founder of this College. The work was started by the Upland congregation of the Brethren in Christ Church, with the full cooperation of the Overseer, C. C. Burkholder, who became the first president. Dr. Peter J. Wiebe, the educational leader of the work for a number of years, did much to get the work started. Dr. Wiebe, who might be called the founder of schools in the Church, visited from home to home, seeking the cooperation and financial support sufficient to open the new institution of learning. In addition to the visitation, mass meetings were held in which the question was publicly discussed. The opposition to starting a College was relatively small, so the work was launched with a strong backing by the Upland Church. Without the splendid support of the Upland Church, the institution would not have come into existence.

The new location was formerly the Alpine Winter Resort. The campus is on the edge of Upland, and about a twelve-minute walk to the business center. The main building is used for administration offices, library, chapel, and class rooms. The other buildings on the campus are a twelve-room girls' dormitory, and a three-room dormitory cottage. The chapel is named after the first President, and is called the C. C. Burkholder Memorial Chapel. The girls' dormitory is called Nancy Byer Hall, having been named in honor of "Grandma Byer," one who was an example as a Christian.

J. R. Eyster will be remembered for his years of service as chairman of the Board of Trustees. J. H. Wagaman dedi-



cated the new plant to the service of God, for Christian Education. Alma B. Cassel will be remembered for her many years of service as dean and registrar. She is the second dean of education in the Brethren in Christ Church. Dr. H. G. Brubaker will be remembered as President when the new location was first put to use, and for increasing the enrollment to about one hundred students a year. Arthur Climenhaga became president in 1942.

**JABBOK ACADEMY.** Jabbok Bible School and Academy opened its doors as a school September 14, 1925. Before the plant was used as a Bible School and Academy, it was used for an orphanage from 1909 to 1924, and was under the control of General Conference of the Brethren in Christ Church. This institution started in 1899, when Brother and Sister A. L. Eisenhower, as pioneers in a new country, decided to start a Faith Orphanage and Missionary Training Home. They had a large vision of the work they would like to accomplish as is evident by the charter which states:

Whereas . . . filed in the office of the Secretary . . . certain articles of organization with a view of forming a corporation to be known as the Jabbok Faith Missionary Training Home and Orphanage . . . for the purpose as follows: The preaching of the gospel in every land and to maintain a Missionary Home and Bible School for the training of missionary workers for Home and Foreign mission work. . . . and also to maintain the publication of christian religious literature. And those desiring to co-operate with the Association can be received as missionaries, evangelists, and other gospel workers, provided, they are deemed worthy.<sup>1</sup>

When the founders realized the work was too heavy for them after years of successful running as an orphanage, the

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1. The above is from the Organization and Bylaws of the Jabbok Faith Missionary Training Home and Orphanage.



work was turned over to the Church. The one hundred and sixty acres of land and the buildings were accepted with a guarantee of paying annually a stipulated sum to the former owners. In 1924 the Orphanage work was discontinued and soon plans were made by the Oklahoma Church to start a school. General Conference accepted the plan and the work was started under the leadership of D. R. Eyster, the Overseer of the Church in Oklahoma, and Dr. P. J. Wiebe, the first President.

The school is located one mile from the town of Thomas, and eighteen miles from Weatherford. The aim of the school is to produce able Christian students under the faithful instruction of Christian teachers. It is a small school with high "Christian Ideals."

ONTARIO CHURCH SCHOOL. The Ontario Bible School and Academy of Fort Erie, Ontario, is now housed in what was formerly Canada's Biltmore Club, built and owned by citizens of Buffalo, New York. The work had moved previous to this, in an effort to find what seemed best as a permanent location. When the question was being considered where to locate in the Spring of 1938, it became a matter of interest and discussion throughout the Canadian wing of the Church. A family living near the present location were talking concerning the school, and the daughter said why don't they buy the Club House. This was a new idea, so the father told it to the leaders of the Bertie District, and it was finally presented to the Church for consideration. As other districts in Ontario wanted the school, it was a question just what would be the result, and when finally voted on by those given the deciding power, this new location was decided on by only one vote breaking what would have been a tie.

The idea of having a school in Ontario dates back before 1932, but it was in this year that the Canadian Joint Council of the Ontario wing of the Church appointed a committee to launch a school. The first period of school work was for three months, and it was conducted at Springvale, Ontario, in 1933. The next term started January 1, 1934, at Gormley, Ontario, and continued for thirteen weeks. The work from January, 1934, to March 1938, was conducted in a large dwelling belonging to Sister Clara Wideman. The length of the school year has been gradually increased over a period of years to meet the need of gaining a full year's credit in a school year.

The new location on the Niagara River front is easily accessible by auto without going off the main traveled highway. The noted Canadian boulevard from Buffalo, New York to Niagara Falls, Ontario is only a short distance from the school building. The school is located in the Bertie district, and only a few miles from Stevensville. This being the largest district in Canada makes the school available not only to students from different parts of the Church, but readily available to many of the matured members who find profit in visiting the school on many special occasions. The complete property includes not only the large school building, but in addition, one hundred acres of land. The building, with its other advantages, has a splendidly decorated auditorium used for assembly programs and other services. The land makes possible any future developments which may be needed as the work grows. Little did the first fathers of the Church who crossed the river near this point when they entered Canada dream that near this spot a school would be located to train the youth of the Church in the ways so dear to them.

This school, being yet so young, has already had a list of leaders, most of whom served for only a short period of time. Dr. P. J. Wiebe's name is listed as the first president of the work. The work is too young to predict even who in the future will be listed as the outstanding leader of education in the Canadian Church.

In the early educational program of a religious body, often those who are not trained definitely as educational leaders must take charge. These leaders serve the Church in attempting to keep the school from making any move which will displease the members which might result in a whispering campaign against the work. This is an important task as a lack of support for the work would be a great hindrance to the work of the Church, and to the rising generation. These leaders will have their reward for the work which they accomplished. While they are sometimes misunderstood by educational leaders of the nation, they are understood by those who believe in the doctrines of the Church.

**YOUNG PEOPLE'S MEETINGS.** Young People's Meeting is what this work is called in the Brethren in Christ Church instead of the name used by a number of organizations, "Christian Endeavor." This work is rather recent in development. In 1920 many congregations in the Church did not have a young people's meeting. Some of the churches and districts which answered "no" to the question, "Do you have a young people's meeting?" were Air Hill, Bertie, Bucks and Montgomery, Clinton County, Clarence Center, Hummelstown, Kindersley, Mastersonville, New Guilford, Ringgold, Springfield, Oklahoma, Wainfleet, and Zion. This list is large enough to reveal the fact how general it was throughout the Brotherhood not to have such meetings.

The earliest Young People's Meetings, regularly held in any Church, of which we have record, were held at Belle Springs, Kansas. At this Church Young People's Meetings started in 1900 and have been continued since that date. They are considered by this congregation to be a success in affording opportunity to the young people to exercise in Christian service. It is looked upon by this congregation as being a necessary feature of the work of the Church. Fairview Church, Ohio, had what they termed a Young People's Meeting in 1908, but it only continued a few years. The congregation at Sippo, Ohio, started one about 1910, which was not successful for many years, due to the lack of workers. After a large revival, held at Messiah Bible College, in 1912, a Young People's Christian Society was formed. About 1914 the Fairland Church, in Pennsylvania, started one which meets regularly every Sunday evening. In 1916 the Church at Bethel, Kansas, started one which they felt was a success.

This work, like the Sunday School, had considerable uphill pull to get started. Many opposed it, but gradually it has become one of the approved institutions of the Church. In recent years the work has been growing quite rapidly and many new societies have been formed. The Grantham Society was the first to organize fully, with a constitution and by-laws. The revival referred to had reached many young people in the community who had not been reared in the Church. To provide for these people, an organization which would interest them and provide fellowship and help was the plan. The leaders interested in this organization were hopeful the constitution and by-laws would serve for societies throughout the Brotherhood.

A brief explanation of these articles of incorporation de-



serves a place here. Under the name, Messiah Young People's Christian Society, provision was made for branch organizations. Three classes of members were recognized and named probationary, regular, and honorary. The officers were to be superintendent, secretary and treasurer. Branch, or local organizations were to have the same officers with assistants to the superintendent and secretary. There were to be five committees, namely, soliciting, visiting, evangelistic, arrangement, and auditing. It was thought that the organization should own real estate and have capital sufficient to help support members in need and thus show that the lodge was not necessary. If this would have developed throughout the Church a strong youth organization would have developed, and many more youth conferences would have been the result. Time has brought much that was visioned, but in a different form. The present youth work lacks some of the earlier aims but the work has had a worthwhile development.

The question of Young People's Work finally came before General Conference. In 1916 the Kansas State Council petitioned to provide Bible subject matter for study in young people's meetings. A committee was appointed to prepare outline lessons and to publish them in the *Evangelical Visitor*. D. W. Heise, J. R. Zook, and S. R. Smith were assigned this task. Then in 1931 Kansas Council petitioned again and asked that a committee be appointed to supply material for Young People's Meetings. The petition states that no material is provided. It was passed that a committee be appointed at once. This committee provided material but felt that it was not used to any great extent. The Christian Life Bible Studies, as they were called, became more widely used in 1932-1933. The studies were published in the *Evangelical Visitor*, and thus were made available to all interested.



Young People's work took on a new development in 1934 and Conference considered a constitution for Young People's Societies. In 1935 twelve articles were approved which set forth the details of the constitution. The name to be used is "The Brethren in Christ Young People's Society," and the motto chosen is "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." In 1937 a Young People's Work Board was established consisting of five members. Starting with 1935 General Conference took more interest in having special sessions for young people during the conference period. The Young People's Societies in very recent years have started to support through special offerings Church projects as well as supplying means for Young People's work.

Youth Conferences, a new phase of educational work in the Church, started in Kansas about 1925, under the able leadership of Homer G. Engle and others. This conference was held on a camp ground near Topeka, Kansas, a place well suited for such a retreat. The profitable hours passed by quickly as conference attendants, speakers, and those in charge associated together to the good of the whole group. It was a time of character building and spiritual advancement in the things of God. Everything was well managed, including the meals, the sessions of conference, and the time for rest and recreation. David Shirk, of Topeka, one of the leading educators in the Church before the Church schools began, was one of the speakers. The other speakers from a distance were Brother and Sister A. D. M. Dick, from India, and the dean from Beulah College and from Messiah Bible College. Some of the leaders in the Kansas Church were fearful of this new adventure, so regular conferences have not been held each summer.

In 1933 it was decided to hold a youth conference at Messiah Bible College, Grantham, Pennsylvania. This conference was well attended and was greatly appreciated by the young people. One of the main features, copied from the Kansas Conference, was dividing the young people into small groups with a counsellor to live with each group. This method has continued to be used through the years. The Conference did not grow tiresome because of variations in the program. Young people left this conference with a new vision of life and with a determination not to live in vain. Much credit for the success of the Conference was due to the splendid group of speakers present for the occasion. Grantham has had a conference each summer, with a good continued interest each year. Provision is now made for two age groups, and the largest enrollment in any one year was four hundred fifteen, including both sections. So many have participated as speakers, leaders, and workers that no one person or persons deserve special mention for what has been accomplished. Most of the more recent conferences have been conducted with the major part consisting of rather long talks. A number of long talks closely following one another has not proved the best, so in 1940 a change was made. Instead of a committee of three arranging for the conference, a committee of six decided to have less solid sermon-type talks and instead, take part of the time for actual conference with smaller groups, and time for periods of leisure. This is more as our Master did when He was on earth, and what blessing came to those He taught.

Short Young People's Conferences are now being held in many districts. Many of them are only one day in duration. This is a great contrast to the early years of the Brethren in

Christ Church, when youth seldom joined in Church fellowship until of age, or, in many cases, not until married. The full possibilities of this type of work have not yet been realized. As long as adults are welcomed to at least some of the sessions, as is customary, the work will not divide youth from age and this has proved to be true to the present.

By 1940 the Church has found herself heavily loaded with institutions of learning. If the constituency were closer together, less expense would be entailed in the educational program. At present the support is not sufficient to make the work a credit to the Church as it should be. The Education Board of the Church has not had sufficient authority to guide the educational program to the best solution of the problem. Sections of the Church have sometimes worked independently, and thus the best for the future may not be realized.

## CHAPTER XIV

### BENEVOLENT INSTITUTIONS

For a number of years the Brethren in Christ Church supported four benevolent institutions, two in Pennsylvania, one in Oklahoma, and one in Illinois. These four, however, do not cover all the interest nor activities in this type of work. A concern for this work was revealed in Kansas as early as 1885. The Messiah Rescue and Benevolent Home dates back to 1895. In 1898 a work was started in Lancaster City. The Jabbok Orphanage work dates back to 1899. In 1900 a work started near Morrison, Illinois. In 1908 an interest was manifested in starting a Beneficiary Board. This chapter will deal with the development of this work in the order in which the work started.

Jesse Engle, the leader of our first missionary group to Africa, was interested in the Church starting an orphanage before 1885. He talked the matter over with a number of the members in Kansas and received so much encouragement that he felt safe in purchasing a section of land which he, with others, felt would be suitable and might not be available in the future. The farm land was being purchased and settled so rapidly, so with the thought of an Orphanage in view, Brother Engle bought a section, securing it with the land he already owned. A sudden change came in the Kansas boom when the financial depression of 1885 hit Kansas. This caused Brother Engle to lose his land and the result was that an orphanage was not built in Kansas by the Brethren in Christ.

HILLSBORO ORPHANAGE. Brother Engle was a supporter of the Hillsboro Orphanage in Kansas, which work Tobias Martin, of Martinsburg, Pennsylvania, with Amanda Dohner, had founded. Sister Dohner was a member of the Brethren in Christ, but due to her intense hatred for tobacco she helped to place the work under the Russian Mennonite German Church, called by some the Crimea Mennonites, but known in Church History as the Mennonite Brethren Church of North America. It came about in this way. Sister Dohner was strongly supported in her attitude toward tobacco by Martin, of the Mennonite faith, so the orphanage was started among these people and partly under their oversight or supervision. Later, the Board of Directors, numbering twenty, was reorganized with a number of Brethren in Christ being placed on the Board. In 1898, Enos Engle and Sister Engle, members of the Brethren in Christ Church, took charge of the work as superintendent and matron. They continued in this capacity for almost six years. When they left the work, there were fifty-five children in the Orphanage. Brother Avery Long and Sister Long were in charge of the Orphanage for more than a year. Some years after the Engles left, the work came into the hands of the Mennonites exclusively. The children were nearly all scattered out in other homes, and the Orphanage was turned into an Old People's Home and a Hospital.

MESSIAH HOME. The Messiah Rescue and Benevolent Home had its inception February, 1895, when the issue of starting a home for the homeless was brought to the Cumberland District Council. It was decided that a meeting be called of those interested April 15, 1895, at Mechanicsburg. Jacob Engle, the Overseer from Lancaster County, was Chairman,



and Amos Z. Myers acted as secretary. A suggestion was made that a certain sister might open her home to start the work until a larger place could be provided. Brother Engle offered fifty or sixty acres of the best land of his farm for one hundred dollars an acre on which to start the work. T. Avery Long offered his farm in Centre County for three thousand dollars. J. G. Heisey, of Lancaster County, by letter, offered a site free on Pleasant Hill, no amount of land was mentioned. D. S. Seitz, of Harrisburg, offered to sell a property to the church for six thousand dollars, and donate five hundred of it and give five hundred more of the amount for a room for his mother.

This special council, after hearing the different propositions, decided that a home for the aged, the afflicted, and the poor, including all ages, regardless of sex, ought to be built by the Church. They also decided that Harrisburg, or a farm in the vicinity of Harrisburg, offered the best advantages. A committee of eight was appointed to decide upon the site, and a committee of five to receive subscriptions and donations. This all came about through two sisters of the Church thinking a Home would be nice, and suggested it to the Deacons for consideration at the council. It was difficult to raise the required money for the purchase of a site, so in course of time, a place was rented and dedicated March 1, 1896, as the Messiah Rescue and Benevolent Home. J. H. Myers and Katie Ann Myers, his wife, the parents of Amos Z. Myers, who served as secretary at the first special council, were the first steward and matron. The first Managing Board and charter members were Samuel E. Brehm, Henry Garman, Samuel R. Smith, S. Shumberger, and A. B. Musser. A charter was obtained April 15, 1896.

May 11, 1897, the property was bought for ten thousand dollars. The buildings, being old and not satisfactory, made it advisable to build new. This was made possible through fifty members of the Church obligating themselves to pay the interest on sufficient money to build. The building was completed October, 1897, and was dedicated November 4, 1897. The three-story building with basement, auditorium and necessary rooms for the conducting of a home, including large porches, was a credit to the Church.

A few notes from the record of proceedings and minutes of the Home for the years 1897-1899 reveal a picture which no other source of information could give. The Board considered applications and bills along with many other items. At the meeting held January 12, 1897, the bills consisted of medicine and sundries, \$4.23; for washer, \$3.00; coal, \$9.50; bread, \$3.00; milk, \$2.65; groceries, \$15.17. The donations reported at this meeting amounted to \$8.16, and \$2.00 was received for stable rent. Bills and income to pay for them is a history all its own. The Board met once a month. At the meeting of January 11, 1898, prices were set for selling lots from the plot of ground along 12th street at Jonestown Road. At the April 12, 1898, meeting, it was reported that a lot on 12th street was sold to A. B. Musser. At the May 9, 1899, meeting, it was agreed to sell S. R. Smith a strip of two hundred feet, beginning at the Northwest corner of Market St., a lot parallel to Jonestown Road for \$1075.00, and forty feet more on 12th street to A. B. Musser for \$625.00, but both brethren refused to pay this amount. July 11, 1899, the issue of selling S. R. Smith a plot was again considered by the Board.

The Home owned land touching Market Street, the old

Jonestown Road, twelfth street and a short distance on Bailey Street. The height of this valuable plot made it possible to look over the city from the Home. The location was straight across from the large Catholic Home on the other side of Market St. Barring the noise of trains and smoke, it was a splendid location. Too much of the land was sold, to beautify the place properly with trees and shrubbery, and to seclude it from other buildings. A number of the members built homes on lots purchased. The most outstanding home was the one built by S. R. Smith, which can easily be identified by the high stone pillars of the porch and a lookout on top of the house from which one can view the whole city. A picture in the *Evangelical Visitor* of June 4, 1922, is of great value in giving the future generations an idea of how the Home appeared at that date. This picture includes the brick building erected for an Orphanage with the money given by Miss Barbara M. Kern, of Indianapolis, Indiana, May 15, 1900, and dedicated May 19, 1901. The porch-like connection between the two buildings was for the comfort of the old people in passing from one building to the other. The whole plant was used for old people after the orphanage proper was moved to Grantham, and later to Florin, Pennsylvania.

Miss Kern consented to the moving of the Orphanage to Grantham, and that the building should become the property of the Messiah Home. The Home for children which was made possible through Miss Kern's gift is now located near the native home of the donor. Miss Kern was a native of Mount Joy Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. The Orphanage was moved to Grantham with the idea of having the children out of the city. This idea of a change to better the moral surroundings was presented to General Conference

in 1907. In 1912 a committee was appointed to secure a new location in the country. The committee met at Grantham, June 7, 1913, and selected a twenty-six acre plot in York County, which location was confirmed by the Board of Managers and Board of Trustees. Some could not understand how the Orphanage in Harrisburg could be sold to the Messiah Rescue and Benevolent Home, which was all one institution under one management, and the money used for a building at Grantham. Some had to die out to what they could not understand, and those who were pushing the transfer hardest were "absolved from any odium or reflections" by General Conference. S. R. Smith and A. B. Musser were the most interested in moving the work to Grantham, and without question it was not only the welfare of the children they had in mind. They were interested in the welfare of the children, and also in locating Church institutions at Grantham.

Later another District in the Church became interested in having the Orphanage. Approximately twenty thousand dollars had been spent at Grantham for grounds, buildings, and equipment. A. B. Musser had moved to this other District, so he, with others, worked to make the change. One of the first steps toward moving the Orphanage was changing some of the Board members. There were some outstanding advantages in keeping the work at Grantham, but others thought the Orphanage should be in another District. At a special council held at Harrisburg, September 5, 1924, it was decided to move the work to Florin, Penna. The spring of 1925 the work was moved to the new location, and the old location was sold. A. B. Musser, Levi O. Musser, and Henry O. Musser deserve the most credit for the fine Orphanage plant located on the high knoll of the Levi O. Musser farm. Henry O.



Musser deserves special mention for his many years of faithful service on the Orphanage Board. Workers who deserve special mention for their labor of sacrifice and labor of love are Hannah (Baker) Cober, Mary E. Hoffman, and Anna Witmer. The list of those who have faithfully helped through the years is long, and much credit is due them.

Returning to the Old People's Home in Harrisburg, from which the Orphanage was separated, we find a carefully financed institution, growing in strength through the years. This institution was also facing the issue of being moved to a new location. As is always the case in such issues, there are those who oppose as well as those who favor. One touch of the struggle involved in changing locations of institutions must suffice for this brief history of the Church, so we shall leave unmentioned how it all came about. A new plant was desirable and almost required, so it was finally decided to purchase a new location. The old plant was torn down, except the brick building, known as the Kern Home, or Orphanage. This is now used for the Light House Mission, working under the Home Mission Board.

General Conference of 1931 provided for a committee to draw up plans and solicit funds for a new Home. It was not until September 8th, 1935, that the laying of the cornerstone for the new home took place. A large crowd of interested spectators were present for the occasion. Thirty ministers from different parts of the Church were present. The new site is the corner of Twentieth and Paxton Streets, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. It is located on the three-lane highway from Harrisburg to Hummelstown, via Lebanon to Philadelphia. It is built on a three-acre plot sufficiently elevated to command a distant view. Harrisburg is one of the few



cities to provide free water and sewerage for a Home of this type. The land was bought from the Don Cameron Estate. Elizabeth King, the oldest member in the home, broke the ground for the new building.

Under the able leadership of Henry K. Kreider, and the members of the Home Board, the largest and best building in the Brotherhood was built. It is one hundred seventy feet long, with sun parlors at each end. The building is three stories high, and has two wings each seventy feet long. There are one hundred two guest rooms, a large chapel, and many other rooms as needed. The dedication was September 13, 1936. It was a great moving day when the old folks were taken from the old home on Bailey Street to this modern building in the summer of 1936. It must be left for a special history of the Home to give detailed information and to mention the many outstanding inmates and worthy workers through the years. For a history of the Messiah Rescue and Benevolent Home and Messiah Home Orphanage from its start to 1902, see the history published by the Board, which was compiled by S. R. Smith. It is a small book of eighty pages.

**THE LANCASTER HOME.** An Orphanage work started in the city of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in 1898. A number of women in the city met together for prayer and fellowship. Reverend John H. Myers and Sister Myers, of Grantham, visited in the home of one of these sisters and proposed the starting of an Orphanage. Sister E. J. Barr and daughter were interested, and in December of 1898, the Barr home was consecrated for Orphanage work. January seventh, 1899, this home received the first child from the County Alms House. The same day a number of interested people met to-

gether to effect an organization. John H. Myers was made president, Catherine A. Myers, his wife, vice president, Violetta Barr, secretary, E. J. Barr, steward, and Sister S. G. Barr, matron. The home was named "Ishi Faith Home." It was located at 512 W. James Street. It was decided that it was to be a Home for orphan children, and a place for worship and instruction.

The Articles of Faith decided on for the Home contained a motto, "Holiness unto the Lord," and a statement that "Christ is all in all, our Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming King." The articles stressed sanctification as a definite work of grace; Divine healing in answer to prayer; the pre-millennial coming of the Lord Jesus; a belief in social and sexual purity; and opposition to the use of tobacco or strong drink, secret orders, and pride expressed in dress or any other adorning.

Noah Zook and Sister Zook with Brother and Sister G. C. Cress visited the Home before the Cresses left for Africa. Two evening services were held, at which Brother Cress did the preaching. Elder Weaver, of the Hepzibah Faith Home, of Tabor, Iowa, visited the Home when on his way to Africa. He remained ten days and conducted evening services and Bible readings. The Zooks' first visit was the last of January, and the first of February. They returned March 21, 1899, and stayed at the Home for five weeks, helping along with the work. May 15th of the same year Samuel Zook, of Kansas, and Jacob M. Engle, of Donegal, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, conducted services in the Home.

Very early in the history of this new project, Catherine Myers, the wife of the President, thought that not only children, but old people, should be accepted in the Home. This

would have necessitated separate quarters and entailed greater expense. The matter was considered on two different occasions. The second meeting was called March 15, 1899, for special consideration of the question. The proposition was unanimously defeated with the result that the President, Brother Myers, resigned from his office.

June 24, 1899, the Court of Common Pleas granted a Charter to the "Ishi Faith Home." On July 4 of the same year, Abraham Eisenhower was appointed President, but on August 1st, 1899, he resigned, stating that the Charter revealed that a resident of the state should be President, and he did not consider himself a resident of Pennsylvania. Amos F. Martin was then made president, but he soon resigned. Sister Adda Engle was elected president pro tem, September, 1900. The last meeting of the Home Board was held March 3, 1901, the year the work closed. Services started by the Home were kept going in homes and in 1907 a site was purchased by the Church for mission work. The outgrowth of the work is the Brethren in Christ Church in the city.

During the life of the Home a child was deserted by its mother in the city of Lancaster. She was left in a Hall of a private home. When found, she was taken to the county hospital and the superintendent offered the child to the Home. Her exact age was not known, but was judged as about four months when received. The child was named Ruth, and in the absence of her parental name, the word, "Hall," was used, as she was found in a Hall of a home.

OKLAHOMA ORPHANAGE. The Orphanage which started in Oklahoma as the Jabbok Faith Missionary Training Home and Orphanage, dates back to 1899. This is the

same year that Brother and Sister A. L. Eisenhower served at the Lancaster Orphanage, Pennsylvania, for about one month. They must have returned to Oklahoma and immediately laid plans for the Home in Oklahoma. This work in Oklahoma was started on the farm owned by the Eisenhowers. See Chapter thirteen of this history for a brief account of the history of the work, until it was discontinued and the Jab-bok Bible School was started.

It is interesting to note the growing idea concerning the caring for children from the first meeting at Mechanicsburg, 1895, which resulted in the Messiah Rescue and Benevolent Home and Messiah Home Orphanage to the starting of the work in Oklahoma. In a period of a few years the Church, both East and West, became interested in caring for neglected and homeless children. It was the period of great awakening in the Church in relation to missionary work. Caring for others was one outlet for the spirit of evangelism and helpfulness which had spread far and wide. The Harrisburg Home started with the idea of caring for the old, feeble, and destitute. The Lancaster Home had in mind the caring for orphan children and, along with that, being a center of evangelism and instruction. The Oklahoma home had in mind the caring for children and a place to teach the Bible and train workers for both the Home and Foreign Mission fields. It was only a few years later that the Church started schools to care for the training in mind. These Orphanage workers were but forerunners of the Bible schools and colleges in the Church.

In the By-Laws of the Oklahoma Home, provisions were made for a superintendent, instructors, and helpers. The Harrisburg Home provided for a steward and a number of



committees of which one was an Educational Committee. This committee was to provide for the necessary education of the children in the Home. The Illinois Home, which will be considered next, started with the idea of caring for and training homeless children, and the training of missionaries. It was for a time called the Mount Carmel Faith Missionary Training Home and Orphanage. The Church orphanages and schools started with the idea in mind of either doing mission work or training for mission work. This growth was a natural result of the spiritual awakening which swept the Church at the close of the nineteenth century. The New Testament pictures the Christian Church actively engaged in mission work. How could these members, awakened and deepened in their faith, be inactive in relation to the needs of the world and claim New Testament standards of spiritual life!

MT. CARMEL HOME. The Mt. Carmel Home started March 1, 1900, with one child. Abram G. Zook, Sister Zook, and their daughter, A. Myrtle Zook, were the first workers. William McCulloh was the next steward, then D. B. Martin, followed by J. H. George. One of the workers, Sister Katie Bollinger, who served many years, seventeen in all, deserves much credit for her faithfulness. In these individuals mentioned, as well as the many other workers who served, we see the result of consecration through a close walk with the Master. The Zooks gave the forty acres of land and their home for this work. The location is ten miles from Morrison, Illinois, in Whiteside County.

The beginning of this work at Mt. Carmel dates back to a night of prayer. Sister Sarah Bert and some of the friends of the Chicago Mission poured out their burden to the Lord for a home for neglected children. Soon after this, the Zooks



felt definitely led to give their home for such work, and it was considered a direct answer to the prayer of the Mission workers. From 1901 to 1912 the work was carried on as an undenominational work. From 1912 to the present it has been under the Brethren in Christ Church.

No change was made to the original farm house until 1916, when a new kitchen, pantry, and an upstairs bedroom and bathroom were added. In 1917 the basement was improved and enlarged. The same year a furnace was installed, which greatly improved the heating of the building. Besides the house and barn, there is a small one-room schoolhouse on the place. The Orphanage has its own school for the training of the children. The place of worship is the Franklin Corners Church, which is across the road from the Orphanage. For many years the Orphanage has published the Mt. Carmel Tidings. The permit for mailing was obtained February 6, 1928. The Editor of the Tidings for a number of years was A. Myrtle Zook.

**BENEFICIARY BOARD.** The Beneficiary Board is a part of the benevolent work of the Church. This Board functions in relation to the Orphanages and at the same time serves individual members of all ages, but more especially those who are old. Any person in need, if a member of the Brethren in Christ Church, may appeal to this Board for help. Aid is given from the Beneficiary Fund which is under the direction of this Board. Members living in fully organized Districts, if in need, are to be cared for by the District whenever the District is financially able to do so. Provision is made for such who have been disabled and for funeral expenses of members and members' children, when funds are lacking to bury them. The main interest of the Board is to

care for needy widows, helpless orphans, missionaries, ministers, and evangelists who have served the Church, and who have no means to care for themselves when their period of activity is over.

This Board is responsible to see that the Orphanages are visited at least once annually. This Board is the final appeal for Orphanages when problems arise which cannot be settled satisfactorily internally. This Board assists in seeing that the Orphanages are properly financed and takes a concern in helping to supply workers as the need requires.

The starting of the Beneficiary Board work dates to General Conference of 1908, when the question of establishing a system to provide for the needy was presented to the Conference. Previous to this, there was some money set aside as a Poor Fund, which was in the hands of the Home Mission Treasurer, but no regular offerings were taken for this cause. From the starting of the Church to 1908, it was generally considered that the care of the needy belonged to the work of the Deacons. This left all the responsibility to individual Districts. There was a growing feeling that the Church in general should care for those in need, as some members were not living in organized Districts, and as some Districts were not as well blessed with this world's goods as were other Districts.

General Conference of 1908 provided for a free-will offering to be taken the following conference year. It also appointed a committee of three to formulate plans and regulations to care for the administering of the fund. Out of this move the Beneficiary Board resulted. The work was considered at some length at the conference of 1909. The Brethren found when making a survey of the Church concerning the needy, that the Bible statement is a reality—"For ye have the

poor always with you.” Twenty Districts reported members needing help, some regularly, and others intermittently. Some Districts reported a lack of funds to care for the needs in their midst. In 1913 a request came to Conference to have a better working plan to care for those in need. The request included a separation of the Poor Fund from the Home Mission Fund. Out of this consideration of the question, the fund was separated from the mission fund, and a permanent board of seven members was established. The first chairman was Warren Dohner, of West Milton, Ohio, and the first secretary was Joseph Myers, of Greencastle, Pennsylvania.

Considerable has been accomplished through the years, but a completely satisfactory program of caring for those who serve the Church has never been worked out. As it now stands, those who serve the Church until they are incapacitated must either be cared for by friends, or struggle along as best they can, or be classed with the poor. If classed with the poor, the Church will not allow them to suffer and such are being well cared for. This situation is more or less an outgrowth of not having a salaried ministry nor salaried mission workers, but supported workers. There are no large incomes from which a percentage can be laid aside to provide incomes when disabled.



## CHAPTER XV

### CHURCH POLITY AND DOCTRINES

For an understanding of the Polity and Doctrines of the Church as approved at the present, one should turn to the latest revision of the Constitution and By-Laws. For a study of Bible Doctrine as quite generally accepted by the Church, read Bible Doctrine, by H. L. Smith, our missionary to India, who died on the field. This book was published in 1921. For the doctrine of the Church on Washing the Saints' Feet, see the Treatise by William O. Baker, M. D., published in 1893. For the Doctrine on the Second Coming of Christ, see the book, He Is Coming, by J. R. Zook, published in 1903.

This chapter is not strictly an account of Polity, Doctrines, and Customs, but an attempt at the history of them. In 1940 there were still a few, but very few, members in the Church who were of the opinion that there should be no change in Polity, Doctrine, and Customs. One sister in 1930 was much grieved when a certain District placed strips of carpet in the aisles of the Church where she worshipped for many years. She thought if some of the old members would return to life they would be greatly shocked at the pride which came into the Church. God's Word never changes, but man does, and this makes history. This is the most difficult part of this history to write, so my reader must bear with your author in the many weaknesses which will be evident.

This history will be far from complete, for it is difficult to trace changes. Most changes in a religious body do not come



about by decisions of local congregations, nor of councils. Such changes are generally recorded, but comparatively speaking, those recorded are very few. In most cases, changes are gradual, just a slight difference here and a slight difference there, until a radical change is the result. People follow one another. So when something different is started, the change is quite certain to have a following. This is especially true when liberty is taken to conform to the thinking and practices of the day and age in which one lives. Some changes come about through the difference in products available. Materials available in one generation may not be manufactured in another. Today it is impossible for a Church body to live to itself as some of the early sects were able to do.

The reference to few records on changes, comparatively speaking, is misleading if from this the idea is drawn that there is no material on hand. For this discussion at least one hundred booklets, pamphlets, and clippings yielded information to give enlightenment on the history of Polity, Doctrine, and Customs. Among these are minutes of councils, and answers to a questionnaire sent throughout the Church. Other evidence is drawn from museum articles formerly used by members either for apparel or as utensils.

The Polity of the Church has been a matter of growth from the first to the present. At first the Church had no written constitution or rules of government. The small amount of business which needed attention was handled by the congregation. Parity of all the members whatever the position was the rule. One's vote counted the same as another. For many years, quite often the oldest minister was looked to as Overseer. This was the practice among some other churches and

it was based on such Scriptures as I Timothy 5:1, "Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father, and the younger men as brethren." Those older were respected for their judgment in knowing what was best. If the younger brethren differed with the older, the views of those older were respected and followed.

As the Church grew, and a form of government developed, that which became a practice was either copied from other organizations, or grew naturally out of the need at hand. A Scripture was given as the basis for whatever became a practice, so in this sense, the Word of God was the constitution of the Church. If no Bible statement was found to back up what was considered advisable, it would not be accepted as a permanent rule. The Word has been the authority for Polity, Doctrine, and practices. At least an effort was made to be certain that there was no Scripture against what was done. This does not exclude the fact that much of the present Constitution and By-Laws is copied from other faiths. Churches copy one another, and, as much as some might want to think differently, the Brethren in Christ Church has been no exception to the rule. On the other hand, there is much that is individualistic and peculiar to the Church.

The Articles of Faith, given in chapter five is the only document which has come down from the first to enlighten us on the Polity, Doctrine, and Practices of the Church at the beginning. These articles should be re-read as a foundation for further consideration. The changes through the years from these articles might be said to constitute the history of Polity, Doctrine, and Customs.

Matthew the eighteenth chapter was considered the Christian order for the household of God from the beginning of

the Church. This implied the most tender care for all converts. Should a convert after joining the Church fall into sin, but retain his outward profession, he must be dealt with according to the principles of this chapter. If he is not submissive, he must no longer be considered a member until he repents and is fully pardoned. The Church will feel the unity of the Spirit when the individual is restored. When out of fellowship with God and the Church, he should not be counted an enemy, but admonished as a brother, and helped when in need. For a period of years in some parts of the Church, those who lost their membership were considered the same as one who had never joined. This grew out of an interpretation of these words in verse seventeen, "Let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." In recent years the spirit of our early fathers is returning. The Christian's attitude toward a sinner, whether he has been a member or not, is one of love and helpfulness. Now the feeling is that since love should prevail towards all, how much more should it prevail toward one who had at one time been a Christian.

To deal with matters as suggested in the previous paragraph, or any other business which would arise, an organization of some kind was found necessary. The division for many years was ministers, deacons, and laity. In case business came before the congregation, generally the oldest minister, as Overseer, took charge. When new congregations developed, other ministers were recognized. When different congregations met for business, the oldest minister took charge. Later, a vote was taken, which minister should act as chairman. For a time no records were kept. The Word of God, as interpreted by the ministers, was what was followed.

The ministry was respected and what they preached was believed. As the Church grew, naturally more business confronted the organization. At first, all members had a vote in general councils. The first records of a general council which were preserved are those of the council of 1871, held at the home of John Mohler, Stark County, Ohio, April 20 and 21. These early minutes were written in longhand. The minutes of 1881, of the council held in the Ringgold meeting-house, Washington County, Maryland, were printed on one sheet, five and three-fourth inches by eight and one-half inches. For a number of years no record was kept of moderators and secretaries. This was in keeping with the teachings of the Church. One member was not considered above another and the Head of the Church was Christ.

The older members remember hearing their fathers speak of a general council of the Church being held in 1843. Another council, more general in nature, is reported to have been held in 1852, at the home of Samuel Herr, Englewood, Ohio. Elder Levi Lukenbach was the Moderator. A general council was held in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, during the Civil War. It is claimed this is the council which chose the name, Brethren in Christ, and went on record as being nonresistant.

In the old minute record book of the Dayton District, southern Ohio, is found a brief history, confession of faith, and Church government. Levi Lukenbach was Overseer at the time this record was made. He was one of the best informed men of the Church in general of his time. The date of these records is 1879. Changes in polity were few in those days, so most of the information given dates back almost to the starting of the Church. This account states that the leader in



the District was considered an Overseer, or an Elder, or Bishop. Next to the Overseers were Ministers, or Preachers. Then came the Deacons, or Visiting Brethren, and fourth, the Lay members. The chief duties of the Overseer were the oversight of the district, to preside at council meetings, have charge at communion services, do the baptizing, receive members, and expel when necessary. The ministers were to preach the Word, and perform the duties of the Overseer in the Overseer's absence, or by advice, or by the consent of the Church. Deacons were to visit the members at least once a year, to provide for the poor and infirm, and to care for the duties of their charge. All members were to have a voice in council, but due respect was to be given to the older members. There was to be an annual district council to consider local needs and elect delegates to the annual conference. The General Conference was for the purpose of considering matters of a general character and points of doctrine and Church government. The Mission Board was for the purpose of having general charge of spreading the Gospel. Officers of the Church were elective, and were to hold their office during life upon good behavior.

**CHANGES IN POLITY.** Some changes in polity have taken place through the years. In 1878 General Conference was declared supreme. The Church was informed that District Councils should not pass resolutions conflicting with the regulations of Conference. In 1886 the question of delegate vote at Conference was turned down in favor of a more general ballot. Gradually more stress was laid on the importance of delegates. In 1914 it was decided that any organized district with a membership of at least twenty-five must send a delegate to Conference, or pay into the Executive Treasury



the amount equivalent to the expense of sending the delegate. Regulations were easier made than carried out, but the effect was a more representative delegation at Conference. The voting power of Conference finally was held by the delegates and members of local Church boards and Conference boards. The order of Conference which has been quite generally adhered to was decided upon in 1873. Moderators and secretaries were to be elected, with the understanding that only delegates qualify for these positions.

The Conference of 1898 appointed a committee of three to revise and publish in book form all minutes of previous conferences. In 1901 a ninety-six page booklet, five and three-fourth inches, by eight and one-half inches was published. It contained a brief statement of origin, confession of faith, and Church Government, with an abstract of the most important decisions of Conference from 1871-1901. In 1904 a similar work was published, known as the General Conference Index. This book was used considerably by all who were interested in Conference work. Considerable improvement was made in the minutes of Conference after the appointing of a permanent Conference Secretary. In 1918 another improvement was made in the minutes, when it was decided to publish Conference Minutes and missionary matter in separate booklets.

The first permanent Conference Secretary appointed was S. R. Smith, of Grantham, Pennsylvania. He served for many years in this capacity and added much to the smooth running of Conference. He was placed in this office in 1904 and continued to 1916. From 1917 to 1927, C. N. Hostetter, Sr. continued the improvements which had been made, and added as the years passed by. In 1928, O. B. Ulery took

over the work, and has ably handled the work in its greater complexity as the years have come.

Changes in certificates and recommendations took place through the years of Conference improvements. As a background to this, it was decided in 1907 that all Districts should keep a record of all members, including name, address, and date of admission to Church fellowship. This record was also to include such items as installation of officials, the date of organizing into a district, the time of starting mission efforts by Districts, names and places of worship, and other details of an historical nature. Many Districts were slow in conforming to this request, and it was not until Record Books were provided in 1938 that a sincere effort was made to look up past records and provide for a careful recording for the future. It was in 1917 when this form of certificate of membership was provided:

“This certifies that.....of.....State or Province of.....is a member of the Brethren in Christ Church formerly known in Canada as ‘Tunkers.’ He holds his present membership in the.....District.”

It was in 1926 when the California District request was granted for a recommendation blank with two detachable forms, one part to be kept on file, and the other part to be signed by the officials of the new resident district, and returned. For a period of years, efforts were made to improve letters of transfer without a great deal of improvement, so such complicated set-ups were discontinued for the present method as outlined in the Constitution and By-Laws.

One reason for the unity of the faith of the Brethren in Christ Church is the result of carefully examining the min-

istry concerning their doctrinal views. No educational requirement has been made, leaving it to each congregation to select the type of individual desired. But as early as 1878, Conference decided that when one was elected to an office, before being ordained, he was to be examined on doctrine, by the Elder of the District, with the assistance of another Elder<sup>1</sup>, and several other Brethren. In 1896, it was decided that those who claim a call to the ministry, apart from the call of the Church, could present the same to the officials, and if found worthy after careful examination, could be ordained. In 1899 the matter of examination was more definitely defined. All Church workers from this date were to be carefully examined by a board of three Elders for general workers, and by the District for local workers. If workers transgressed the doctrines and practices of the Church, they could be suspended until they reformed. This was the beginning of the Examining Board. At first, examinations were given annually; later however they were given every three years. The first board consisted of Martin Oberholser, Samuel Zook, and Charles Baker.

Other considerations affecting the ministry came before Conference from time to time. In 1909 a long report was made by a committee of five on the point of a supported ministry. The committee believed support was Scriptural, but they warned against a salary, or anything that might bring luxury to those serving the Church. On the other hand, due to the lack of pastoral care, it was thought that something should be done to help ministers who were financially handicapped, and thus hindered in their work. A few years later B. Frank Long, who was much interested in a supported min-

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1. The Church for a period of time called the Overseers Elders.

istry who would be free to further the work, sent a letter and a leaflet throughout the Brotherhood, calling attention to the need for further action on a supported ministry. His idea was to help brethren who could go into the work by having a fund supported by the Church. Brother Long personally supported a minister in the Church, who consented to move to another field where ministerial help was needed. No doubt much advancement could have been made in the work, if the Church would have been ready to support a system as Brother Long was advocating. Misunderstandings arose through the effort put forth, and instead of blessing resulting, the Church finally lost Brother Long, who was worthy not only as a minister, but also as a member.

The Conference of 1906 ordered that the names and addresses of the officials of the Church should be inserted in the Conference Minutes. This gave the ministry, along with the other officials, a recognition due them. It was some years later that the Church listed licensed ministers. The suggestion to license young men was presented to the Home Mission Board in 1925, at the Highland Conference. It was presented to Conference in 1926, along with the recommendation of the Church Extension Board. It was in 1930 when the first list of licensed ministers was placed in the Conference Minutes. In 1919 it was decided to issue certificates properly signed to ministers, as well as other Church workers. All this development gave the ministry greater prominence. Ministers have never been placed on tenure, as was done to the Overseers in 1926. On this date it was decided to terminate the office of a minister's work as Overseer at the age of sixty-five. He may be reelected by majority vote, and every five years thereafter, if desired.

When it was found necessary to have a Church headquarters, the question arose what shall be designated as such. For a time the address of the General Conference Secretary was designated. This, it was found, did not quite meet the need, especially due to the fact that the address of the Conference Secretary was subject to change. In 1922 it was decided that the Messiah Home, 1175 Bailey Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, is to be considered the permanent headquarters. As Committees and Boards at times used the Home as a meeting point, Pennsylvania State Council in 1924 decided to purchase office equipment. This equipment was donated to General Conference as general Church property, with the understanding it could be used jointly by the Home and the Church in general. When the Home was moved to 2001 Paxton Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, this became the Church Headquarters with all items needing attention to be addressed to the General Conference Secretary.

It was in 1906 when the Church authorized the incorporation of a fire relief, in the State of Pennsylvania, for the Church at large. The incorporation was separate from the Church, with no obligations on the part of the Church. Those in charge of the Fire Aid, as it was called, were members of the Church. For many years, both in United States and in Canada, a mutual fire aid program was carried on for the benefit of all who participated. The number of fires fixed the amount of the assessment necessary on the valuations. The low rate of assessments made the fire aid appeal to members of the body. At times some dissatisfaction arose concerning the amount paid on losses. Some found themselves losing interest in the incorporation, when it was found that the Church was not responsible for what was done. On the



whole, however, the aid proved satisfactory to the Church in general. A few members in the Church did not believe in insurance of any kind, including Fire Aid. The Canadian wing of the Church decided that fire insurance was not Church work, and discontinued the aid altogether. The Fire Aid was continued in United States much longer than in Canada, but in 1939 it was also discontinued in the States. The main reasons for the corporation in the states being dissolved were the complexity of the laws governing such corporations and the lack of members in the Church who were willing to carry the responsibility.

Due to the method of dividing the Church in general into Districts, the question naturally arose concerning boundary lines. Canada was separate from United States Church, due to the international boundary. When the Church in Pennsylvania was incorporated, the Church in other states gradually came under this incorporation. There was difficulty in the Church in Canada fully joining, or coming under this incorporation, but this did not hinder the working together under one conference. So these large general boundary lines were understood, but smaller District lines made the problem of boundary lines acute. In cases where there was only one District in a state, there was no issue as the whole state was considered the District's field of action. This was similar when there was only one District in a County, for in such cases the whole county was considered the District's field of activity. In a number of cases a number of Districts are in the County, and this necessitated a boundary line according to the opinion of some. To allow members to decide for themselves to which district they wanted to belong did not appear, as some thought, to be good housekeeping in the Church. So in 1926

a committee composed of D. H. Martin, E. N. Engle, C. R. Heisey, J. R. Steckley, and A. W. Climenhaga, was appointed to put down in writing the boundary lines of Districts. In due time this work was executed, but not without some difficulty. In some cases, lines had been quite definitely established, but in other cases the division consisted of membership, rather than roads, and streams, and township or county lines.

Members within an arbitrary line were expected to attend and support the District in which they lived. In case of new converts, this appeared unreasonable. For example, a family became interested in a revival a few miles from their home and decided for Christ and the Church. They naturally wanted to continue to worship and support the Church where they decided for Christ, but found after joining the Church that they were living in another District. It has not always been easy to iron out these situations, and in some cases, members were lost to the Church on account of such problems. For this reason and others, it has been found necessary to make exceptions to the general principle.

**CHURCH BOARDS.** A definite part of the polity of the Church has to do with committees and boards. In 1878 a standing committee of three was appointed to care for any Church problems arising during a conference year. The following year this committee was enlarged to five, three to be from the United States, and two from Canada. This committee consisted of Henry Davidson, Levi Lukenbach, Jacob N. Engle, Christian Heise, and William Huntsberger. This standing committee became known as the Executive Board. In 1905 it was decided that this Board should be elected by General Conference, instead of Pennsylvania State Council. The Church incorporated in Pennsylvania was appointing the

Board, but due to the Church at large cooperating with Pennsylvania corporation, it was deemed advisable to have the Church in general appoint this Board. The following year, 1906, the annual Executive Board assessment was started. The first year it was five cents per member, and has varied through the years as the need required. In 1910 it was decided that all matters for Conference should be tabulated and published by the Executive Board. This did not continue, but instead became the work of the General Conference Secretary.

This General Executive Board through the years has served in various capacities. They have not only served in solving problems, but as well, surveyed the Church in general and recommended from time to time such items to General Conference which appeared necessary for consideration for the welfare of the Church at large. Space cannot be given for more names than the members of the first committee, but many who have served would be worthy of special mention for their devotion to the Church and their sacrifice for the cause.

It was also in 1906 when Conference decided to make permanent a nominating committee to nominate at Conference the names of members for the various Boards. More and more much of the Church work was being carried on through Boards subject to General Conference. Some of the Boards have already been mentioned, so only a brief summary will be made here in the order listed in the Conference Minutes of 1939, with the exception of the Executive Board.

The work of the Beneficiary Board was for a time carried on jointly with the work of the Home Mission Board. In 1920 ratification of the amendment to the constitution and by-laws

authorizing the creation of the Beneficiary Board was made. The Examining Board was started in 1899 for the purpose of examining Church workers. In 1923 it was decided to have an Education Board to correlate properly the educational work of the Church. The Foreign Mission Board and Home Mission Board had their inception before 1873, when Brethren were appointed to care for Church needs classed as mission work. See Chapters ten and eleven for further details concerning these last-mentioned boards. A Sunday School Board was appointed in 1909. For the development of Sunday School work, see Chapter twelve. The Publication Board dates back to 1887. For the full development of the publication work, see Chapter twelve. The Board on Young People's Work was started in 1937.

CONSTITUTION. One of the outstanding publications of the Church is the Constitution and By-Laws. This has been a matter of growth over a period of years. An almost sacred document or confession has not been handed down from the beginning, except as explained earlier in this chapter.<sup>2</sup> This has been an advantage in the sense that the Bible has been the final statement of faith and practices. On the other hand, there is a weakness in that every now and then the Constitution and By-Laws are revised, which has a tendency to make them lose their guiding value, due to constant changes. Another advantage might be mentioned in this privilege of reconsideration from time to time. It permits each generation to express themselves in the light of the present as well as of the past. The major changes have been in the By-Laws, which is natural, due to the brevity of the Constitution, and the few

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2. See reference to Articles of Faith, page 281.



necessities for change. Anyone who is interested in the details of changes should consult the different revisions authorized by Conference, and Conference Minutes.

In 1883 Conference decided that the Church Government, published by Henry Davidson, was to be distributed throughout the Church, and that in 1885 a revision of it would be made and published. In 1886 Conference appointed a committee of five to form uniform rules for Church government. This committee consisted of Levi Lukenbach, Aaron Wingert, Samuel Baker, Benjamin Shupe, and Henry Davidson. In 1899 Conference in handling a problem to be decided upon agreed that the confession of faith adopted by the Conference of 1887 shall be the standard by which the question is settled. General Conference of 1904 adopted a revised Constitution and By-Laws, which is found in the General Conference Index (21). In 1914 it was decided that the By-Laws could be considerably improved, so a committee was appointed to consider the improvements advisable. The work passed through the hands of several committees before it was finally published. In 1922 the advisability of again revising the Constitution and By-Laws was considered, and again a committee was appointed and a final revision was published in 1924.

In 1927 an effort was made to stop the constant changing of the Constitution and By-Laws, so that they would be more greatly respected. Continual changes, it was claimed, helped to break down both respect and reverence of the members for the work. No changes were to be made in the future unless the change desired had been tested for a period of five years, and then finally approved. This had the effect of not bringing to Conference each year petitions for changes. In each



revision an effort was made to hinder constant changes, but all of these plans have not kept the younger generations from presenting plans for reconsideration.

In 1934 an appeal came from the Ohio-Kentucky Joint Council with the idea that an enlarged Constitution would safeguard the essentials of government and doctrine of the Church. This rather strange argument had its effect and after ten years of respect for the Constitution and By-Laws all that was done before was laid open for reconsideration. At this same Conference a committee was appointed to collect and receive suggestions on ideas of revision. The following year the revision work was started and some parts were still being considered in 1940. Five years of careful consideration has resulted in an enlargement, a more complete handling of some sections, with new phases being added for the first time. The work should not need to be changed for many years. No major changes in polity were made with the exception of strengthening the position of the Executive Board in relation to Church work in general. There was some sentiment in the Church to bring the ministry more to the front, and have fewer Overseers over small congregations, but only a slight improvement of the minister's position was made.

**DOCTRINE.** In turning to the history of doctrine we find that the changes which constitute history are not as plentiful as might be expected. On most points the Church continues to believe as she did from the beginning of the organization. Especially is this true in relation to the doctrines concerning God, Christ, and Holy Spirit. It is also rather difficult to decide whether certain items belong to the history of doctrine or to changes in customs.

A comparison of the recognized doctrine of the Church as given on pages 13 and 14 of General Conference Minutes of 1909 with the statement of Faith in the latest revision of the Constitution and By-Laws reveals how little the Church has changed on her general doctrinal statement. The statement of 1909 stresses repentance, confession, and regeneration through the operation of the Holy Spirit, instead of forgiveness and sanctification. This point is rather vital and worthy of much meditation. The Church for many years made much of the influence and operation of the Holy Spirit and the result was holy living. The change is the stress laid on cleansing and empowerment which tends to stress experience rather than the continued influence and operations of the Holy Spirit. The statement of 1909 stresses the thought of Christ as Lord and Master along with being our Saviour and coming King. This is another glorious truth which is not clearly brought out in the recent revision. The recent revision brings to the front the premillennial view and the importance of the Prayer Veiling. Earlier in the Church there seemed no need to stress these doctrines as no thought of challenging them came to the surface. Times have brought changes so it is only natural that later statements would emphasize these items. A further comparison for anyone interested should be made with the Article of Faith accepted for guidance for our schools and given on page twenty-seven of Conference Minutes of 1925.

One of the greatest changes in doctrine concerning experience is the different way of teaching sanctification as it was taught earlier, and as it is taught at present. As is evident from the above paragraph, one not even well versed in Christian Doctrine can easily see that two schools of theological

thought have pressed for attention and both have had their influence. The Church has had the problem of not confusing her doctrines by mingling several schools of thought in her statements of doctrine. In fact, Calvinism and Arminianism, which are opposite have both been given some consideration. This, along with special consideration on the doctrine of sanctification has resulted in statements which will no doubt in the future need some clarification. The major change has been the stress on sanctification. The Brethren in Christ appears to be the only Church with a religious garb, including a prayer veiling, which has clearly stated her belief in this experience. This has given the Church fellowship with the plain groups, the holiness groups, and because of Calvinistic influences, with the fundamental groups. This has resulted in a membership that is far from a unit in their doctrinal viewpoint. Much of this is the result of not enough literature being published by the Church for the membership at large. The Church schools, with a similar emphasis, are bringing about a far greater unity of doctrine than was believed in a few years back.

When the teaching of Sanctification as a definite work of grace was accepted by a number in the Church, it soon became a General Conference issue. In 1886 a committee of five brethren were appointed to set forth the sentiment of the Church on the doctrine. In 1898 the question, "Is a second definite work necessary for securing eternal salvation?" was presented to Conference. This is the answer given:

That on account of the diversity of feelings, opinions and even experiences in connection with the subject, as evidenced by the discussion, the different elements be kept under control by largeness of love, and much forbearance, according to Ephesians IV, 1-3 and 31-32 (21).

The same question in slightly different form was presented to Conference in 1899. A committee was appointed to give an expression. Another committee was appointed on the issue in 1909 and this committee reported to General Conference of 1910. All Elders present at the Conference examined the report. This report can be read in the minutes of 1910, on pages twelve to twenty-seven.

By a careful handling of the issue the Church was saved from being divided again. The result has been that the Church has definitely stated her belief in the doctrine and made the teaching of sanctification a part of her doctrinal statement. The term, second definite work of grace, was carefully avoided and this helped make for unity. Those who believed in Sanctification as a definite work after the New Birth taught it in that way. Those who accepted the teaching of heart cleansing and Spirit guided life, but not as a separate definite experience, taught it as they understood it. This charity avoided the condemning of one another even if there was not a full agreement just when the cleansing took place in relation to time, and to the New Birth. An entire agreement of all the members may never be a reality, at least such is the situation at this writing.

On the doctrine of baptism in one sense there is no history as the Church has from the first to the present adhered to triune immersion. However, some variations have come up for consideration. In 1907 the question arose concerning baptizing in tanks instead of streams or lakes, as was the custom. In 1911 the question was brought up concerning immediate baptism of converts when streams were frozen. In each case it was left to the District or congregation to decide by a majority vote. Two other issues have come up for con-



sideration, the one being the question of re-baptizing and the other the question of baptizing converts not wanting to join the Church. In a few cases to satisfy certain individuals a re-baptizing was administered. This has continued to be discouraged as a regular practice. The point of baptizing converts not wanting to join the Church was considered on several occasions. Such baptizing has been discouraged, but in 1923 permission was granted to make exceptions when immediate baptism is administered for the purpose of caring for converts with the thought of bringing them into full Church membership. Infant baptism has always been considered not in keeping with the teaching of God's Word. The rite has been reserved for those who claim a definite knowledge of being born from above.

Prayer veiling has been practiced from the beginning of the Church, but the teaching has not always been the same. For many years the prayer veiling, or covering, was taught as a sign of subjection and of authority. The thought of subjection has gradually given way, and instead there has been a tendency to place woman on equality with man when she is veiled. The feeling is that mutual rule is ideal, yet each has his and her special sphere. Man, because of his build, and strength, is considered as being created for harder toil and protection. Woman should naturally look to man as head. The order is—the head of woman is the man, and the head of man is Christ. If woman will not veil herself in honor of her head (man), let her veil herself because of the angels. As angels veil their faces before God so should the woman be modest in her relations with man. In olden times modesty on the part of woman demanded the face to be cov-



ered. There is great danger in following a custom or ordinance and at the same time losing the real meaning intended. Such a change would be history, and some history is being made.

## CHAPTER XVI

### CHURCH DOCTRINES AND CUSTOMS

On such questions as divorce, prohibition, and going to law the Church has stood rather firm on principles involved. The membership is not a unit on any of these issues, but in general are quite agreed. Members are not to re-marry as long as there is a living companion, whatever the cause of separation. Some would make exceptions to this in case a couple were not Christians when married. This leaves an opening which is considered dangerous by many, and to such no re-marriage is allowable as long as a former companion is living, whatever the situation.

On prohibition, a change in view has resulted from definite teaching on this point. For a time the Church permitted wine at communion services. Private individuals used liquors for medicine and some wine as beverages. The change has been in a radical abhorrence for anything fermented and at present very few would think of partaking of strong drink. In fact, many members refuse the use of coffee or tea on the grounds they contain harmful ingredients. Voting for local option is permitted but not generally encouraged. The members are in favor of prohibition laws and the work of the W.C.T.U. but on the whole these reform movements are not considered activities to which one should give his time. The feeling is that if the work of the Church is cared for as it should be these other phases of work become a small matter. The point is that the work of the Church should merit one's

full energy and that reaching souls with the message of the Cross is the major activity of the Christian.

Going to law is not strictly forbidden, but in general is discouraged. A member is not expected to go to law with another member, but instead any disagreements arising should be handled by the Church. However if a non-member is unfair in dealing with a member of the Church, it is not considered unlawful for a member to protect himself. While members do not as a rule use the courts to force their claims, they will when drawn into the court protect their interest. The feeling is that the courts are not for the Christian but rather for the non-Christian. This does not eliminate the use of the courts for legal matters which are necessary in many walks of life. The attitude is one of being subject to the laws of the state as ordained of God.

Little change has taken place on the Conference rulings of 1872. This Conference decided that members are not permitted to foreclose mortgages and sell property by sheriff sale. This Conference also decided that to electioneer for political purposes is not in keeping with the teaching of the New Testament. It also decided that members should not serve as jurors or as police. Exceptions have been allowed as certain members took personal liberty and did not abide by these rulings. The few who took liberties were not influential in changing the attitude of the Church.

**NON-RESISTANCE.** The Brethren in Christ Church has been non-resistant from the beginning in relation to war. This is one reason that little part is taken in politics and little use is made of the courts. The attitude is that one who participates in national and local government affairs as serving in

offices and taking part in elections can not rightfully claim the position of a conscientious objector. In 1913 the California wing of the Church through their mission work had an applicant for baptism who was a soldier. The Church at large through the Executive Board consented to baptize him while being a soldier with the understanding that at the expiration of his term of enlistment he would return to private life. This reveals somewhat the attitude of the Church.

Nothing is purposely done to create any sentiment against authority, but the stand of non-resistance is based on the teachings of the New Testament which are considered the guide for Christian living.

There is not much actual history concerning the Church's attitude on non-resistance. If there has been a change, it has been in the direction of becoming more firm on the point. Through the years efforts have been made to keep the governments of North America, where members live, informed on the Church's stand. During the Civil War of 1860-65 in United States, it was necessary for the Church to go on record at Washington as a non-resistant body. A council held in Lancaster City, Pennsylvania decided to record the Church in Washington as, The Brethren in Christ, formerly known as River Brethren, and believing in non-resistance. The Scriptural basis offered for being non-resistant was Matthew 5:44, "Love your enemies"; Luke 6:27, "Do good to them that hate you"; Luke 6:28, "Pray for them that despitefully use you"; John 18:36, "If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight"; II Corinthians 10:4, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God." In later years other Scriptural statements were added setting forth the same view.

During the World War 1914-1918, a number of the members of the Church were put to the actual test which classed them as conscientious objectors. It was found that each individual must stand on his own conviction. However, the fact that one was a member of a non-resistant body helped to clarify his position as a conscientious objector. Both in Canada and United States, young men of the Church were sent to camps and they were given fair treatment at the hands of the authorities. Many interesting experiences could be given of what many of them passed through.<sup>1</sup> Some of those who actually went to camp were used better than those who took a stand at home for what they believed was right. Walter D. Taylor, formerly of Michigan and later of Houghton, Canada, was severely persecuted. He said little about it, but if it were written, it would class him with those who suffered greatly for their faith. He was roughly handled even to the extent of being nigh unto death, but through it all he kept the victory.

Due to another world war starting just twenty years after the war of 1914-1918, Conference in session in 1938 voted in favor of sending representatives to the capitols of United States and Canada to reaffirm the Church's position of non-resistance. An interesting report of the committee for United States is found in the Conference Minutes of 1939, pages sixteen to twenty-one. A plea was made to the President in these words, "We pray that the authority of your office may be exercised to preserve the constitutional liberty and freedom of conscience hitherto granted us, to worship God according to the dictates of our enlightened conscience."

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1. See booklet, "Non-resistance Under Test," for the experiences of E. J. Swalm.



This plea followed a reaffirming of the Church's faith on non-resistance. The Church's position has been regularly stated in the Bureau of the Census reports on Religious Bodies published by the Government Printing Office at Washington.

The Church not only opposed voting and political affiliation, but followed other customs not understood by those more liberal-minded. Part of a letter written in German March 27, 1856 by a member who withdrew from the Church gives an interesting side light on some issues which came up for consideration. It reveals how serious matters became to some. Changes in customs and practices have come slowly and hearts are often wounded when changes are made. "Therefore we could not see any other way than we took, namely to withdraw ourselves from the Church, and all such Brethren that did engage in such works of darkness, such that take part in worldly elections, and such that go to law before the world or unbelievers, and those who send their children to the Sabbath School, and from there take them to places of worldly amusement and pleasure. Then also for taking money for solemnizing marriages, and also to teach unscriptural doctrine."

The above letter was received by the Canadian Church where the experience took place. A few years later in 1860 a man by the name of David Ausherman of Burketsville, Maryland, applied for Church membership. He was examined by the Church of Franklin County and was refused membership. The chief charge against him was worldliness. Along with other things he was considered worldly in that he was a surveyor, a school teacher, and a music teacher. In those days some members opposed lightning rods and when

some used them on their buildings others were offended. These brief touches of differences and offense are given to reveal that any change in custom was likely to cause difficulty. As we consider the changes in customs, some readers may to this day take exceptions even to the facts. The inflexibility of old age sometimes refuses to accept innovations and divisions arise.

Change in dress has taken place through individuals desiring a closer adjustment to the prevailing styles of their generation. In the discussion of the development of the Church, glimpses of the mode of dress were given. At this point only a few general changes will be noticed. As the arrangement of the hair has much to do with one's appearance, it will be considered as a part of the person's dress.

CHANGE IN APPAREL. For many years both the men and the women parted their hair in the center and combed the hair flat to the head. Styles of dressing the hair came and went, but this one style continued to be used by members of the Church. The most of the men wore their hair thick behind and cut off rather square. In some cases a mustache as well as a beard was worn, but in most cases the beard was worn alone. In 1878 a ruling was passed that a mustache without a beard was not allowed. Changes took place so gradual that dates could not be given. Parting the hair on the side and combing it straight back has come into rather common use for both sexes. In general among both the men and the women, the hair is worn more loose instead of flat as formerly. Apart from this, the membership to the present has avoided decorating or curling the hair. This is all in keeping with the custom of the Church to avoid the latest styles and to be modest in appearance.

Strange customs sometimes arise and one which influenced sections of the Church was for men to wear their hats during prayer on funeral occasions. This was copied from other people even if it was directly contrary to the belief of the Church that men should always uncover their heads during religious services. In 1894 Conference decided that it was inconsistent for brethren to wear their hats during prayer on funeral occasions. Hats were worn as intimated instead of caps. The idea of the men wearing hats and not caps dates back to the early days of the Church, but the origin of the idea has not been obtained. Hats are a later invention than a form of cap, but when the Church started, hats must have been the style for the members. The long-tailed coat was a custom which was retained for many years. Short coats have in most cases replaced the long splittail coat. The change in footwear was from the high boot to the high shoe to the low shoe.

The major changes in the women's dress have been from the tight bodice to a more loose waist, and in recent years from the wide skirt to the close fitting. Lighter weight coverings without strings are gradually taking the place of larger, heavier coverings with strings. The short-gown and apron at this writing are retained only by a very few and these few are mostly the older members. Some have dropped the use of the cape which was a development from the use of large handkerchiefs or pieces of cloth used over the shoulders. Few of the large bonnets which almost hide the face remain. In the majority of cases, coats have replaced the use of shawls. Light footwear, including both hosiery and slippers, is replacing the former styles worn for comfort.

In 1921 Conference considered the matter of nonconformity and reconsidered it again in 1922. It was decided that plain attire is in keeping with the Word, but that a rigid form required of all would lead to formalism. The attire as practiced at the time of this consideration was recommended to be followed as the Word does not outline a set form. The Word of God used as a basis for nonconformity are such passages as these: "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning," I Peter 3:3; "That women adorn themselves in modest apparel," I Timothy 2:9; "Not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance," I Peter 1:14; and "Be clothed with humility. For God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble," I Peter 5:5.

PICTURES. For many years, the taking of pictures was discouraged. As a Scriptural basis, the Word was generally quoted in relation to making images and likenesses, and the statement "that which is esteemed among men is an abomination to the Lord." This last statement was applied to anything that was considered wrong and followed by people in general. In 1888 it was decided not to consider members consistent who would have their buildings photographed. These words "Not consistent" were often used in letting members know when they were considered out of place. When no direct sin was involved, nothing further was done as a rule. Thus members gradually took liberty in the taking of pictures until an attempt to stop it would involve a large number of the membership. So in 1921 Conference treated the taking of pictures from the point of view as usages and abuses. Instead of being fully renounced, the members were advised to consistency in the use of photography.



MUSIC. For many years, the Church discouraged any use of musical instruments both in public and private. Bible authority for this stand often quoted were these statements in Amos 6:1 and 5, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion" and "That chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music like David." The European background of the Church was one of considerable poverty and one of persecution; and like the Children of Israel in Babylon, they would not have felt like playing instruments if they had them. This absence of musical instruments for many years and the lack of finances in this country at the first made it natural to associate the use of instruments with worldly pleasure. Among the common people musical instruments were thought of as being used chiefly in connection with dancing and places of revelry. This accounts for the decision of 1872 when Conference instead of using the word "inconsistent" said "no" in answer to the question, "Is it allowed for members to teach instrumental music as an occupation?" In 1880 it was decided that it was inconsistent for members to use musical instruments. In 1883 Conference was asked what to do with a member who violates the ruling of 1880. The answer was that "He shall be admonished and readmonished in love and forbearance."

The use of musical instruments gradually came in and on the part of those who opposed them, much forbearance was necessary. The love suggested was at times greatly lacking. Letters were written and statements made which did not savor of love. It is very difficult for later generations to understand the love and forbearance needed unless the individual of the new generation believes in a practice that others think is not necessary. Some members were influenced by other denomi-



nations which took a similar stand. The Mennonites published a sixteen page pamphlet against the use of musical instruments. When members of the Brethren in Christ read this pamphlet, they felt it their religious duty to warn others of the danger of allowing musical instruments to come into the homes.

The Church has stood for congregational singing only. Choir singing has been kept out with the feeling that choirs have a tendency to sing for entertainment and a show of ability. This attitude made it very difficult for any improvement in singing to take place. The first change was the singing school idea with the thought of improving the congregational singing. Gradually exceptions were made and special numbers as quartettes were allowed. This was followed by choruses as well as other changes. Instrumental music is not allowed in most of the Churches, but with a few exceptions chorus singing and singing in smaller groups are at present allowed. The Church music is limited to sacred numbers and the feeling is that this is the only type of music in keeping with church services. The latest ruling on the matter recommends confining the music of the Church to vocal music only.

This is the proper place to consider the song books published by the Church or used by the Church. The first hymnal which had general use in the Church was published by King and Baird, 607 Sansom Street, Philadelphia in 1862. A copy of this book is in the Messiah Bible College library. The book is three and one-half inches wide, six and one-eighth inches long and one inch thick. It contains 324 hymns written in German and 376 written in English. In the preface of the English section, the difficulty of compiling such a work is

explained. The work was done by a committee, but as was the custom at first in the Church, all names were withheld. Eli M. Engle of Mt. Joy, Pennsylvania, believes the work was compiled by the Brethren in Christ Church. His belief is based on the fact that in the "Spiritual Songs and Hymns" published in 1935, the hymn number 634, "The time is short, the season nears" written by Anna Ziegler Hess, the mother of Abram Z. Hess, Mount Joy, Pennsylvania, is the same as hymn number 241 in the book published in 1862.

The thoughts in this hymn book brought to the worshiper a deep sense of reverence. The sentiment throughout is the insignificance of man and the greatness of God. Man has a duty to perform toward God for the welfare of his soul. The thoughts throughout are serious and life is considered as having many burdens from which the individual looks forward to being freed to enjoy a better place. Along with this, the themes of redemption, sin, and other subjects are brought out clearly in many of the hymns.

"Ye humble souls, approach your God  
With songs of sacred praise;  
For He is good, supremely good,  
And kind are all His ways."

This is the first stanza of number eleven.

"O who in such a world as this  
Could bear his lot of pain,  
Did not one radiant hope of bliss  
Unclouded yet remain?"

This is the first stanza of number twenty-four.

"Sin has a thousand treacherous arts,  
To practice on our mind,  
With flattering looks, she tempts our hearts  
But leaves a sting behind."

This is the first stanza of number twenty-nine.

“Behold the Saviour on the Cross,  
A spectacle of woe;  
See from His agonizing wounds  
The blood incessant flow.”

This is stanza one of hymn number eighty-two.

Whether this is the first hymn book used by the Church is a question. Such variety of books have been used in different sections that it is impossible to trace step by step all the facts. The above discussed book was published in 1862. It was just ten years before this that the division which resulted in the United Zion's Children took place. In the chapter containing the history of the United Zion's Children you noticed no hymn books were used in the service. The hymns that were sung were lined out by the leader in charge of the service. This was more or less the custom in the early worship of the Brethren; but to do this, copies of hymns must have been on hand or else memorized. But even if memorized, the source of the hymns is still a question.

On several occasions Eli M. Engle gave information which might be the answer to the source of the hymns used in the early history of the Church. Brother Engle has in his possession a hymn book entitled “Das Davidische Psalterspiel or the Psalter of David” which was published at Ephrata, Pennsylvania, in 1795. This is a hymn book that was used by a number of denominations. But the hymnal Brother Engle has bears evidence of identification with the Brethren in Christ. An appendix or supplement of hymns is added to the original publication contributed by a committee of brethren amongst whom the name of J. Engel, (Engle) stands first. This would not be a certain proof as there were many Engles in the coun-

ty. It is most interesting, however, and looks altogether plausible. Brother Eli M. Engle states that "the character of these German hymns together with the inscription on the title page of the supplement reflects the spiritual life and fellowship of the first members of the Church."

According to the General Conference Index page fourteen, a committee was appointed in 1872 to revise the Brethren Hymn Book and publish it in German and English in stereotype form. This hymn book was published at Lancaster, Pennsylvania and was ready for use in 1874. The committee in charge of the work was Abraham M. Engle, Samuel Zook, and Jacob M. Engle. In 1884 a committee was appointed to decide on a retail price of the third edition of the Church's hymn book. In 1901 Conference authorized certain changes in this book and a fourth edition was published in 1902. In the preface of the third edition, it is stated that the Brethren's Hymn Book of 1862 was too small. This showed an interest in a larger variety of hymns. It is also stated that the hymns were not only used in singing but were used as reading material, as well as for study and meditation. These books were written in short, common, long, and common-peculiar metre. Some members in the Church were becoming interested in a song book with more modern songs written with notes. Some wanted round notes and some wanted shaped notes. Through careful consideration the Church was saved from going through a period of having to use shaped notes. A very useful book was published as a result of this interest by consent of the Conference of 1906. This was the most outstanding change the Church ever made in her song books. Some of the numbers were to be written with music and some without music. Suitable selections for Sunday School and evangelistic services were added. The committee, sensing the need

of the future, published most of the numbers with music. Five hundred copies had a German Appendix of forty-five selections to meet the need of the members who were accustomed to singing in German. It took a number of years to make the transition from the former book to the new. Some districts waited a long time before making the change. In 1910 a second edition of this book was published and the book was well on its way to general use throughout the whole Church.

The history of the changes in hymn books from 1910 on consists mainly of minor editions, re-editions, and a new publication. In 1915 it was decided to publish an abridged Hymnal for use in revival meetings, Sunday School work, and prayer meetings. In 1923, 6,000 books entitled *New Spiritual Hymns*, were printed. About ten years later a desire for a change gradually grew so in 1935 a new book was published.

**WORSHIP.** Closely associated with music is the Church worship in general. Forms of worship are usually copied and changes come gradually through contacts with other forms as practiced in different churches. The worship for many years consisted mainly in singing, kneeling prayer, testifying, and commenting on a passage of Scripture. All were taken part in by the congregation except the commenting on the Scripture. The singing was usually slow and rather solemn in tone. The custom of reading a stanza and then singing grew out of the lack of books for the congregation. This method was continued many years after books were available.



Prayer was always in kneeling form and in the greatest sincerity. For many years at the close of the service, two brethren would always lead in closing prayer. In a few places this method has continued to the present. Just preceding the closing prayers and following the commenting on the Scripture, one or two deacons would rise and express their approval of what was said. This has continued in a few places to the present time. For a time many tears were mingled with the testimonies and prayers. Some of the early members had hard things to pass through and this giving vent to their feelings through tears was a relief. In some cases life was looked on as rather hard and burdensome. Such looked forward to the prospects of the world to come and all these feelings revealed themselves in the worship.

The seating in worship followed a form which also changed somewhat through the years. The men sat on one side of the house and the women on the other. The ministers faced the people and the audience was seated as explained in chapter three. A change came first in a few churches and is spreading to the other congregations. Parents sat together to help one another care for their children. This broke down the custom of men sitting on one side of the church and women on the other. While in some congregations the custom continues, in others the separation is completely abolished.

**PREACHING.** There are other changes of interest to the reader of Church History. There has been a change in the preaching. For many years the preaching can be described by the term homily. It was a blending of exposition and exhortation. In many cases the speaker would depend on the inspiration of the hour. A whole chapter or a part of a chap-

ter would be used. One verse at a time was read with such comments as came to mind. This would sometimes result in a great variety of thoughts in one single service. This method did not require any notes to guide the minister in his discussion. For many years notes were discounted both by the minister and the congregation. When notes were first used, they caused considerable offense. One minister to convince the audience that it was all right to use a few notes said, "I would rather use a few notes while preaching and actually say something than not to use notes and wander around." At present notes are not opposed and many of the ministers outline their messages following either the topical or expository method of development.

The early custom was for all the ordained ministers present to sit behind the pulpit. Each one was modest when time came to preach. After encouragement from one another, some brother would arise and speak. Often two or three ministers would speak at the same service. Today the usual custom is for only one minister to speak at a service. If other ministers are present besides the speaker, they often either open or close the service or lead in prayer.

Testifying has been a custom in the Church from the beginning. The argument is that some one who is really saved ought to be willing and able to tell about it. A change has come in the type of testimony given. For a time the testimonies were long and consisted of the experiences passed through, many of them being rather sorrowful. The main changes consist of shorter testimonies and statements of victory. Both men and women take part in these fellowship services. The belief is that to testify to one's relation to God strengthens the Christian and at the same time honors his

Maker. A fellowship service of this kind is considered an encouragement to one another.

COMMUNION. The Church holds what is called a communion service. This was a part of the love feast occasion. After a day and a half or two days of fellowshiping together, the communion was the last service. The preaching, testifying and singing all are more or less a preparation for the final commemoration of Christ's death and suffering. Fermented wine was used to symbolize the shedding of Christ's blood and unleavened bread to symbolize His broken body. In 1885 the Church was advised by Conference to use unfermented wine. As each District had the privilege to use which they desired, some time elapsed before the Church as a whole used unfermented wine. General Conference of 1890 expressed itself in relation to the full meal along with the communion. It was decided that the communion consisted of the bread and cup and that the full meal is not sacred. This decision eliminated the need of having tables during the communion service. The Church while granting some liberties has however been quite rigid in discouraging members in communing with other denominations. The ruling of 1876 states, "Promiscuous communion is not considered consistent." During the communion service, the Church for many years used either wooden or tin cups. Each member makes a statement to the next one in the seat and then partakes. The wooden communion cups were never used very widely. Those in use were locally made by some member in the Church. Sentiment is growing in recent years in favor of individual communion cups. A few congregations are changing, but it will be many years before a complete turning to the individual cups will take place.

A regular part of the communion is the Feet Washing service based on the thirteenth chapter of St. John's Gospel. This part of the service preceded the taking of the bread and wine. There has been only one major change in the practice. In 1911 it was decided to follow the single mode of feet washing. Previous to this, one brother or one sister would wash the feet of a number of members. By this method, some members seldom if ever did any of the washing. The single mode requires that all communicant members take turns in washing one another's feet. By this method, a brother washes and wipes the feet of the brother next to him and the one washed in turn washes the next brother.

At first the public religious services were closed without a benediction. In those days the members testified while seated and did not stand to sing. When the last hymn was sung, the leader would say something like this—You are now dismissed in the fear of God—or, The Lord willing and we live, we shall meet again at ——. You are now dismissed. In 1871 Conference decided that a benediction could be used in closing a service. As late as 1925 some services were closed without a formal benediction. At the present the services are closed by a short prayer or a benediction, while the members are standing.

**INFANT DEDICATION.** Another change which has come is the dedication of infants. The Church has been firm in its attitude concerning the baptizing of infants.

Parents desirous of having their children early in life recognized by the Church in some way would inquire about baptism. These inquiries came from those not acquainted with the stand of the Church on infant baptism. Some min-

isters, rather than turn down parents making such requests, suggested dedication instead. Dedication instead of baptism was generally acceptable to the parents. Only now and then would such a dedication take place. Finally the Church provided for this type of service in the By-Laws. To this date only a limited number of parents are dedicating their children in this formal manner. Long before this became a public service and since, many fathers and mothers in the Church have made it a practice privately to dedicate their children to God and His work. In the homes where this has been done and the child interest carefully followed, the results have been most gratifying. Where parents' prayers have not been sincere as they ought to be and a lack of unity existed in the home, the results have been most disastrous.

**MARRIAGE.** Marriage has always been considered a sacred ceremony. Young people have always been encouraged to marry some one reared in the Church of the faith in which they were reared. For a time, young people did not confess Christ until after marriage. The reason for this delay is not known. Some think it grew out of the idea that young people go through a period of life which makes them unstable, even if they profess to be Christians. By waiting until older, it was thought that then no disgrace would be brought to the cause of Christ. During this period of time when youth were somewhat neglected, parents would go to the church services and the children would stay at home. This was not a general practice, however, but it took place in far too many homes. Now the whole situation has changed. Children, early in life are encouraged to confess Christ as their Saviour, and the Church strongly encourages that this confession be made before marriage is contemplated.



The attitude of the Church has been that weddings should be kept simple with the thought that display was a mark of worldliness. In 1890 this ruling was passed, "It is inconsistent for members to hold weddings according to the custom of the world in making a display both in setting tables and presenting gifts (21)." This is the date when more elaborate weddings started to be practiced by some in the Church. Before this, it was the general custom for the couple to be quietly married by the minister and then each one would return to his and her parents' home, and start preparing for the new home. Gradually, elaborate weddings have become the rule rather than the exception. They have also grown in importance until showers, wedding gifts, large meals, and decorations are at present gaining a rapid foothold in the Church. The chief mark of difference between the weddings of the Church and what is called the world is the absence of the playing of foolish tricks. In some cases, where a form of serenade is practiced, it consists of friends gathering for singing and prayer. At present, marriages are beginning to be performed in the Church instead of the home of the bride.

**BURIALS.** Burial of members has also had a history. Changes have come through the years on this point as well. The general practice of the Church has been not to have flowers at funerals. The one who slipped away was laid to rest in a plain wooden coffin to await the resurrection of the dead. Sometimes the departed would have a bunch of wheat heads or a Bible placed in his or her hands. In other cases, at times, lilies were used. These articles were to represent ripeness in years, faith, or purity. Some still hold that the plain oak coffin is the proper kind for Christian burial. Flowers are now used by quite a number and no great difference

is found between the burials in the Church and the common people in general, with this exception that funerals in the Church customarily follow the practice of preaching a sermon and less time is spent in eulogizing the dead. Earlier the ministers would not accept any remuneration for preaching a funeral sermon or for marrying but this has also changed. Viewing the corpse after the sermon is practiced in most places. Serving a meal to those who care to remain after the service is gradually being more and more limited to close relatives.

**INSURANCE.** The Brethren in Christ have been very decided on life insurance and secret societies. To the present, no member as far as is known belongs to a secret society. Life insurance in certain forms has come in. In 1873 Conference decided that members could not be members of secret organizations. In 1877 and again in 1899 Conference decided that life insurance was not allowed. Members here and there took out life insurance which brought the issue again to the Conference floor. A few members were found selling insurance so a decision seemed necessary. Some thought that certain forms were necessary even to provide for proper burial. Soon after 1927, it was decided that Church officials could not have nor sell insurance. Some lost their position in the Church on account of this decision. To handle the situation in general, charity was enjoined and insurance discouraged. From 1925 to 1930 life insurance was rather a live issue in the Church.

**LORD'S DAY.** Keeping the Lord's Day holy has been an outstanding effort in the Church. Work has always been discontinued and the day was spent in worship and quiet. The

afternoons were usually used for rest. Such as were asked by employers to work refused. The results were never serious for the individual usually found something better to do or something just as good. Some members who were interested in factories found it rather difficult to close completely on Sunday. In 1914 the usual weapon used to deal with members considered out of order was once more brought into use. It was decided that the operating of factories on the Sabbath was inconsistent with the stand of the Church. This same decision discouraged traveling on the Lord's Day. The Church in general has continued to respect the day of rest by laying aside as many duties as possible. Some still refuse positions which require Sunday work, while others work when required by their employer.

**STEWARDSHIP.** When the Church started and for many years after, the matter of stewardship meant careful financing such as not going into debt, caring for one's family, and helping a neighbor in need. No offerings were lifted in public for any cause. The usual custom was for members to give the Deacons on their annual visit as much as each wanted to give to be used for local Church expenses and the poor. As there were no institutions in the Church apart from the homes, very little was needed to care for the work. After many years of little effort to collect money for Church work, it went rather hard to change. Some, during the transition, refused to support mission work or Church institutions of any kind. The growth of institutions and of mission work required money to keep them going. So that money would be had for the needs, some started to stress tithing. Those who did not believe in letting the one hand know what the other hand did, stood for the teaching that each one should lay

aside as the Lord had prospered. A few congregations attempted the store-house plan. In this case, each would bring his tenth into the Church treasury and it would be paid out as the need required. Some districts made an assessment on the evaluation of each member. In these cases each member decided on his own evaluation.

The method which seems to have worked best is to permit each member to decide for himself how much and where to give. By encouraging tithing, the members have an idea what is considered their duty. The Church keeps the members informed of the needs, so to the present, it is a matter of giving rather than actually being forced to give. This has created a spirit of good-will and avoided formalism. It avoids the idea that one will reach heaven if he gives; but instead, people give because they are Christians. Some members with a large income would prefer knowing just what each member contributes to the Church so they could compare. This has a tendency to make the poor feel less welcome and to make those who give the most feel they should have the most say as to what the Church should do. All these considerations have kept the Church from becoming an institution of force rather than an institution of charity.

This closing paragraph is an effort to express the spirit of the Brethren in Christ Church for readers of the volume who are not members. The aim in doctrine is to be sound in the faith. The Word of God is respected as the highest authority. The Church would rather believe what some may think is unnecessary than to fall short of accepting the whole will of God to man. The customs of the Church are an effort actually to practice one's beliefs. The aim is to interpret the Word of God in actual living. The

Church is not holding to certain doctrines and customs in that they were practiced by our fathers; but with our fathers, the Church is endeavoring to perpetuate a living active faith which will guide those who follow into truth, love, and an eternal reward which is due those who believe and live according to the teachings of Christianity. The effort is to be Brethren, yes, Brethren in Christ.



## SUMMARY

The history of the Brethren in Christ Church is the history of a people who have sought by example and precept to perpetuate the teachings of God's Word as they interpreted it. The Church was started in Pennsylvania by a small group of believers whose background was in Europe.

The European background is found among the Protestants, who, through the light of Luther's famous translation of the Bible, thought it not wise to follow the ecclesiastical authority of the early part of the eighteenth century. Some of the beliefs and practices can be traced through the Pietists and Anabaptists back to the Waldensians. The persecution received from the State Church for not cooperating fully according to the laws caused some of these Fathers to move to America. They refused to attend the required services and to participate in hostility. Some who became members of this body reached America around 1750.

There are various opinions concerning the starting of the Church in America. The weight of evidence reveals that the work was not a split from another organized body of believers. The Church was born in the cradle of the faiths of the Church of the Brethren, Mennonites, and Quakers. A group of twelve men who had experienced the knowledge of sins forgiven found themselves fellowshiping together for mutual benefit; and in order to keep the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, they considered joining one of the above mentioned groups, but finally decided that they themselves

would organize by putting in leaders. They baptized one another and set apart several as ministers. This new organization stood for the principle of parity of all the members with Christ as their head. Some of the first ministers were Jacob Engle, Hans Engle, and Hans Winger. Jacob Engle was looked to more or less as the leader and thus became the Overseer.

This organization took place about 1778 in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, a short distance from the Susquehanna River. From this nearness to the river, they were designated from other Brethren in the county as the River Brethren. For many years, the Church went by this name, "River Brethren," as given them by other people. The same Church was called "Tunkers" in a wing which developed in Canada. It was finally decided to name the Church, "The Brethren in Christ." The date for the choice of this name has been given as 1862. The organization was not chartered until 1904, when this became the legal name.

From 1779 to 1904 the Church had a gradual growth. The first development was away from the river toward the city of Lancaster and the town of Manheim. Members were soon found in the valleys of Cumberland and Lebanon, as well as in Lancaster County. Three Districts were formed in Lancaster County, with an Overseer over each. This became the method of dividing the work, and has continued to the present. Some Districts have less than one hundred members, and no District ever had over five hundred members. The Overseers of Districts finally were called Bishops and those who assisted them in preaching were called Elders. Thus Overseers and Elders were voted in as congregations developed in different parts of the state.

For many years no church buildings were built, but all the services were held in barns and houses. The first church building was erected at Woodbury, Pennsylvania, in 1867, not far from Altoona. Other sections of the state where members are found are Lykens Valley, Mifflin, Clinton, Center, and Lycoming Counties, and in Philadelphia and vicinity.

Very early in the history of the Church, members moved to Canada. This development dates back to 1789. Hans Winger of Pennsylvania was the first Overseer in this country. It is claimed that Hans Winger was the first minister in Ontario, outside of the English Clergy, to receive the privilege to perform marriages. Districts developed in Canada near Buffalo, New York, near Toronto, and one as far west as Saskatchewan, a total of six in all.

After the Church was established in Pennsylvania and Canada, a growth developed westward which reached to California. The first state outside of Pennsylvania to receive members of this faith was Ohio. Soon after this, some members moved from Ontario to the State of Indiana. Districts are also found in Michigan, Illinois, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Iowa. The states with the most members outside of Pennsylvania are Ohio and Kansas. This development was mainly the result of members moving west to find good land at a reasonable price for their growing families. For many years the Church was mainly composed of rural people. The Church leaders and the members were farmers and no one received pay for Church work.

On two different occasions, divisions took place which divided the Church into three parts. The first division was in 1843 when a number of members felt the Church was departing from some of the original customs, so these separated and

held separate services. This first group which separated had a very slow growth, and to this day they continue to hold their services in their houses and barns. They became known as Yorkers, or Yorker Brethren, due to some of the first members living in York County, Pennsylvania. Most of the Yorker Brethren live in Lancaster and Franklin Counties. A few members reached other parts and those outside of Pennsylvania lived in Ohio and Iowa.

The other division took place in 1852 when trouble arose over the building of a place of worship. Reverend Matthias Brinser, a minister in the then called River Brethren Church, decided there ought to be a place of worship where the members in his locality could meet regularly instead of using the barns and houses. By consent of some of the members, he started to build this meeting-house, as it was called, the exact location being only a short distance from Middletown, Pennsylvania, in Dauphin County. When requested by the Lancaster County Brethren not to build, he and his followers decided to continue what they had started and thus received the disapproval of the main body. In 1855, Reverend Brinser and his followers were expelled. This new body of believers took for their name, "United Zion's Children." This Church spread from Dauphin County to Lancaster and Lebanon counties. For a short time a few members lived in Franklin County, and a few near Altoona. Through evangelistic efforts this church had a gradual growth. They have taken an interest both in benevolent work and in mission work. The Church is divided into three Districts, after the pattern of the Brethren in Christ. They continued to build churches as needed, and in 1921 they received a charter to build what was named Mizpah Faith Home. At the present time, 1940, this body

unites with the Brethren in Christ in supporting mission stations in Africa and India. Young people from this body attend the Brethren in Christ College at Grantham, Penna.

As early as 1850, the Brethren in Christ became interested in mission work. The first form of this activity consisted in leaders traveling many miles by horseback to preach. It was not until 1871 that General Conference decided to give offerings throughout the Church for a missionary fund and to appoint a Mission Board. From this date to the present the Church has had a missionary fund and a Mission Board. At present there are two general mission boards—one for Foreign Work and one for Home Work, as well as a number of smaller boards. Home Mission stations started as early as 1889; but it was not until 1897 that the first candidates presented themselves for foreign work. Jesse Engle, a descendant of Jacob Engle the first Overseer of the Church, headed the first missionary group to Africa in 1897. Much of the awakening in relation to missions came through evangelistic efforts throughout the brotherhood. The outstanding leaders in this work were Reverend Noah Zook, of Kansas, and Reverend J. R. Zook, of Iowa. Amos L. Musser headed the first missionary group who went to India, arriving at Bombay, January 1905.

India has had three active stations supported by the Brethren in Christ until 1924, when one station was closed, and the work was taken over by one of the other stations. The names and addresses of the stations are Saharsa, Bhagalpur district; Supaul Mission, B. and W. Ry., India; and Madhipura Mission, Dauran, Madhipura. By 1918 there were four active stations in Africa. The stations in 1940 are Matopo, Mtsha-bezi, and Wanezi in Southern Rhodesia; Macha and Sika-



longo in Northern Rhodesia. Over eighty workers from the United States and Canada have served on the foreign field. Approximately one-fourth served in India and three-fourths in Africa. The offerings by the home church for foreign work gradually increased from five hundred dollars in 1896, to over five thousand in 1910, twenty thousand in 1918, and over twenty-five thousand in 1931.

There was also a marked growth in Home Mission work. In 1918 there were city missions in Buffalo, New York; Chicago, Illinois; Des Moines, Iowa; Dayton, Ohio, and San Francisco, California. In 1919 stations were accepted by the Church in Philadelphia and Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. Other city missions have been opened in Altoona and Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; Detroit, Michigan; and Welland, Ontario. Many rural stations have been opened in Pennsylvania, Virginia, Florida, Kentucky, and Ontario, as well as in some other states.

The Church did not sponsor Sunday Schools until one hundred years after it started. A few schools started a little earlier, but in some Districts, Sunday Schools did not start until after 1900. General Conference called it a new movement in 1885. In 1940 it is a growing part of the Church work and new schools are being added each year. Sunday School conventions are now held throughout the Church. In recent years Vacation Bible Schools have been started. The enrollment in the Sunday School has doubled from 1917 to 1938, and the offerings increased three times in the same period, reaching the amount of thirty-eight thousand dollars.

In 1874, the matter of publishing a Church Paper was presented to the General Conference. It was not until 1880 that it was decided to publish such a paper. It was named the

“Evangelical Visitor.” In 1917 it was decided to have a Church Publishing House. In 1926 a fire-proof building of brick and tile construction was built at Nappanee, Indiana, the home of the Publishing House. A large volume of business is done each year both for the Church, and for the trade.

The Church supports four institutions of learning—two colleges, and two secondary schools. The question of starting a Church School came to General Conference in 1897, but the work was not started until 1909.

Messiah Bible College started as a Bible School and Missionary Training Home in 1909, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The school was moved to Grantham, Pennsylvania, in 1911. The institution was rechartered in 1924 as Messiah Bible College. The present location is ten miles west from Harrisburg. Students train for the various professions and for service in the Church. Beulah College started in 1920, and is located at Upland, California. Jabbok Bible School and Academy opened in 1925 at Thomas, Oklahoma. The Ontario Bible School and Academy started in 1932, and is located near Fort Erie, Ontario, on the bank of the Niagara River.

Since 1920, Young People’s meetings and Youth Conferences have developed in the Church. Young people for many years were not given much consideration from the standpoint of Church work. At the present, it is quite different, and the change has resulted in a new era for the Brethren in Christ Church.

Benevolent Institutions for the care of children and the aged folks have been well supported. The Church supports an orphanage near Morrison, Illinois, called Mount Carmel

Orphanage. The Jabbok Faith Orphanage, of Thomas, Oklahoma, was chartered in 1901, and in 1924 was discontinued. In 1925 the orphanage building was used for the school mentioned above. The first orphanage in the Church started in 1899, as the Ishi Faith Home, in Lancaster City, Pennsylvania. This work was transferred to the Messiah Orphanage, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and the work at Harrisburg developed into an orphanage and old people's home. The Messiah Orphanage is at present located in a splendid plant at Florin, Pennsylvania, and the Messiah Rescue and Benevolent Home for old people is located at 20th and Paxton streets, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, in a large new building dedicated in 1936. This large modernly equipped Home was built at a cost of over one hundred thousand dollars.

The Church teaches justification by faith, holiness and empowerment, divine healing, trine immersion, washing the saints' feet, holy kiss, nonresistance, Scriptural veiling, and the general resurrection of the dead. Only such who profess a knowledge of saving grace are baptized and taken into the Church as communicant members. All the women members wear the prayer veiling, and are known as sisters. The men are known as brethren, and are expected, with the sisters, not to conform to worldly practices and customs in business or pleasure which are not considered in keeping with the teachings of Jesus. Love feasts and communion services are held in each Church at least once a year.

The Church is controlled by a General Conference held annually in different parts of the Brotherhood. The officers of the Church are bishops, ministers, and deacons. A large amount of the work of the Church centers in boards. The different boards are Beneficiary, which cares for the poor;

Examining, which approves of ministers, missionaries and teachers; Education; Foreign Mission; General Executive; General Sunday School; Home Mission; Publication; and Young People's Work. The Church institutions are controlled by boards of trustees, which boards are subject to General Conference. One conference delegate is allowed to every fifty members.

This Church with less than seven thousand communicant members in America ministers to at least 25,000 people and owns church property which is valued at \$760,040.00.





## APPENDIX



## APPENDIX

### EXHIBIT I

#### ORIGIN OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST

*By Abraham H. Cassel*

Abraham H. Cassel, historian of the Church of the Brethren, gives the following sketch. This was written in 1882 at the request of Bishop Charles Baker, of Canada:

“In 1752 a very remarkable man by the name of Philip William Otterbein, an educated minister of the German Reformed Church, emigrated to this country and settled in Maryland, near Baltimore. He was born at Dillenburg, Germany, in 1726. But soon after his arrival in this country he became convinced of the necessity of a deeper work of grace than he had ever as yet experienced. He accordingly rested not day nor night until he found the Lord precious to his soul in the full and free pardon of all his sins. He then commenced preaching the doctrine of Regeneration and Holiness of life, amidst a great deal of persecution, even from many of his former connections, until he virtually withdrew from his mother church and commenced laboring for the conversion of souls, in connection with two other German divines, Martin Boehm and George Geeting, who he found were of like precious faith.

In 1771, Ashbury and Wright, two Methodist ministers, labored for a while with the German brethren. Their num-

ber increased rapidly, and numerous societies were formed by them through Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. Meanwhile many others of different denominations became co-workers with them. They had no special creed, nor set form for observing the external ordinances. They contended for baptism, but left the mode of its administration optional to the candidate. Hence they could agree with all religious persuasions, and therefore were called the United Brethren in Christ, in contradistinction of the old "United Brethren," or Moravian church, by the additional phrase of "in Christ."

In 1784 the above mentioned Martin Boehm came to Donegal township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and commenced preaching the same doctrine there, which soon resulted in a great revival, and among these revival converts were six men, of whom it might be said as it was of the Bereans, that they were more noble, inasmuch that they searched the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so.

They also frequently met together to interchange their views, as well as for prayer and praise. This did not continue long until they found, among other things, that baptism by triune immersion was the only legal mode contained in the Gospel, and so in order to fulfill all righteousness, they went in company to a minister of the old, or Dunkard Brethren, by the name of George Miller, and requested to be baptized by him, but would then stand aloof and be and act for themselves. Upon that condition the Brethren refused to baptize them. They then cast lots which of them should baptize one of the others, and, he then being baptized, should baptize the other five, which was done in the Susquehanna river. Hence they were called the River Brethren, to distinguish them from the German Baptists, or old Dunkard Brethren.

This happened about the year 1786, and is according to documents in my possession, the true origin and start of them.

Five of the six mentioned above were Jacob Engle, Hans Engle, John Stern, Samuel Heigs, and Christian Rupp. The two Engles and Christian Rupp were their first ministers. Jacob Engle soon devoted himself so fully to the ministry that he traveled a great deal as an evangelist, and after having organized a number of churches in different parts of Pennsylvania, he visited Canada, and at a later period, Ohio, with considerable success. They have also organized churches in Indiana and elsewhere.

The above also shows that the River Brethren are entirely separate from the United Brethren in Christ, that they differ very widely from them in observance of the external ordinances, and should therefore not be blended together. And the assertion that they are of Mennonite origin, or a branch of the Mennonite family is about as true of them as it would be of the Dunkard Brethren, as the one favors Menno Simons' doctrine just about as much as the other. They came from Switzerland and settled along the banks of the Susquehanna River as many of the Dunkard Brethren also did. The account given of their doctrine is substantially correct."



## EXHIBIT II

The Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Samuel A. Rogers, Director, gives the following account of the Church in the publication known as the Religious Bodies of 1916:

“In the latter part of 1750 about thirty Mennonite families in Canton Basel, Switzerland, after a long period of persecution, decided to emigrate westward. They went first to England, and, in the fall of 1751, set sail for America. The voyage across the Atlantic was disastrous, one of the ships, with all their goods being lost, they landed poor and destitute. One company, including John and Jacob Engle, and others whose names are uncertain, settled near the Susquehanna River in the southwestern part of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania in the spring of 1752.

In 1770 as a result of the labors of some members of the Lutheran, Mennonite, and Baptist churches, who were grieved at what they considered the formalism which then characterized the churches, there was a notable revival, which was attended by many conversions. It was conducted principally by Messrs. Otterbein, Boehm, Bochrn, and the Engles, representing the different bodies. Subsequently difference of views arose in regard to the form of baptism, some holding that the applicant should make choice of the method, while others claimed that triune immersion was the only proper form. The result was that they mutually agreed to work independently, in accordance with their various interpretations of the Scriptures.

The believers in triune immersion had no regular organization but were in the habit of designating the various com-

munities as brotherhoods. There was thus the brotherhood down by the river, meaning the southern part of Lancaster County; also the brotherhood in the North; the brotherhood in Dauphin; the brotherhood in Lebanon; the brotherhood in Bucks and Montgomery. The outlying brotherhoods looked to the brotherhood in the southern part of Lancaster County as the home of the organization and it was probably due to this fact that the general term River Brethren was given to the entire body. Another explanation has been given by some, namely, that they were in the habit of baptizing in the river. With the development of these brotherhoods it seemed advisable to select someone to perform the duties of the ministerial office and the choice fell upon Jacob Engle, who thus became their first minister.

In course of time dissensions arose concerning what would now be called minor points, which ultimately caused divisions. In 1843 the body known as "Yorkers," or, as some have termed them, "Old Order" Brethren, withdrew and in 1853 the body known as "Brinsers," but later "United Zion's Children," also withdrew.

At the first, the organization of the River Brethren was simple, but as their numbers increased, a more permanent form became necessary, and about 1820 the present ecclesiastical organization was adopted. During the Civil War some of the members, although proclaiming the doctrine of non-resistance, were drafted for military service, and it became evident that the denomination must secure legal recognition as a religious organization holding that doctrine. Steps to secure recognition were taken at a private council held in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, as early as 1862, at which time those who remained after the separation of the other two

branches and who constituted the great majority of the Brethren decided to adopt the name, "Brethren In Christ," instead of "River Brethren," which was done the following year. In 1904 the organization was incorporated according to the laws of the state of Pennsylvania as "A religious body for the worship of Almighty God," with headquarters at Harrisburg."

## EXHIBIT III

## ORIGIN OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST

*By Bishop J. N. Engle*

Origin of our Brotherhood, "Brethren in Christ," by which name we have been known and so recorded at Washington, D. C., at the time of the Civil War. Prior to that time they were generally known as River Brethren, from the fact that in the revival from which our people, as also the United Brethren sprang, were located in two localities; one down at the river; the other a short distance up the country. The latter would sometimes go down to visit the River Brethren, or the Brethren at the river; and from this latter group were principally those who figured in the founding of the Church. The two principal ones figuring in this organization were my great-grandfather, Jacob (Yockley) Engle, and a man by the name of Rupp.

Here let me divert and bring in a little family history leading up to this point: Our ancestors came from Switzerland, landing at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, October 1st, 1754.

Some people think that our people are a branch or an offshoot of the Dunkard Brethren, which is incorrect, and on which point we will touch later. The parents were brought up under the State Church of Switzerland, "The Reformed Church;" the mother, however, left the State Church and united with the Mennonites, for which act she was persecuted, separated and isolated from her family. Under these conditions and isolation she gave birth to the youngest and eighth child of the family, a son, (Jacob), or (Yockley), born September 1st, 1753. At this time a number of families were preparing to sail for America. Among them, this mother's

family. So one day she said to the mistress, in whose charge she was placed, she, too, would like to go along to America. Upon which the mistress replied, "I dare not help you off or I will fall into the hands of the legal authorities; but I'll tell you what to do, some day when I am out in the yard hanging up the linens, you take little (Yockley) and slip out the back door," which she did, and got by with it and sailed for America. And of the fifty-one or fifty-two babies at the mothers' breasts on the voyage, they all died on the voyage but little (Yockley). And having landed, these mothers gathered round this mother with her babe, saying, "they surely believe the Lord intends something special with this babe," which seems to have had divine oversight and protection for the special work for which he was afterward raised up. These parents both died about five and seven years after landing in America. This boy grew up and when about fourteen or fifteen years of age he also united with the church of his mother's choice.

The revival formerly referred to was principally among formal church members who knew nothing of a change of heart, but now received a clear knowledge and experience of Salvation, and knowledge of sins forgiven. These converts were desirous of a church home, and seeing nothing better about them, they met in conference in view of an organization, in which William Otterbein, formerly a Reformed minister from Baltimore, who at this time, about 1778, became the founder of the United Brethren Church. We are told that in this Conference, the main doctrinal point of difference which hindered them from uniting as one body was on the question of water baptism. Otterbein expressed it as his view, that the applicant should have the privilege of choice as



to what mode of baptism he prefers. While a few, who became the foundation of our Brotherhood, held that it should be administered by triune immersion, exclusively. Some time following this Conference, Jacob Engle and a man by the name of Rupp, if rightly informed, went over (Here we come back to a former point), to another county to interview a Dunkard minister, with the view of asking him to administer baptism to them by Triune Immersion, but they detected something about this man with which they were not in accord, and they returned home and he never found out what they came for. Later they went to see another minister of the same denomination and asked him to baptize them, which he refused to do unless they would unite with his church, to which they were not inclined. Which same minister advised them to do as the founders of his own church did, that they secretly baptize each other. They returned home and took his advice, and to this day it is not known which of the two baptized first. Following this, about twelve persons requested Jacob to baptize them, to which he consented, upon which a communion service was held, and the church was organized, choosing Jacob as their recognized leader and Bishop. And from this little nucleus has grown our Brotherhood to what it is today, which might be much larger. May she continue to grow and increase in all that is good and sound Doctrine till Jesus comes for His ready and waiting Bride.

## EXHIBIT IV

## ORIGIN OF THE BRETHERN IN CHRIST

*By Baswell D. Hitchcock*

The Hitchcock's New and Complete Analysis of the Holy Bible revised and edited by Reverend Baswell D. Hitchcock, D. D., gives the following account of the origin of the church:

“River Brethren, so-called because the founders of the sect in Germany soon after the year 1705 were baptized by one another (the first baptizer determined by lot) in the river Eder. This mother church migrated first to Holland and in 1719 to Pennsylvania. They practiced Triune Immersion. In 1867 there were sixty-five ministers, eighty churches and about seven thousand members found mostly in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Canada.”

## EXHIBIT V

## THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST

*By John K. Miller*

This interesting account written some years ago is worthy of a place in this appendix. In 1934 Mr. Miller claimed there are mistakes in the article. In 1936 Mr. Miller gave in another article his opinion of that date. The reader will see from the second article that much of the information in this article is based on historical facts and some on tradition. Mr. Miller's wife was an Engle.

"It was a sad group of sorrowing mothers that gathered about Anna Engle, in whose arms lay a helpless babe, only a few months old, at Philadelphia, in the autumn of 1752. It was the time when the final farewells were spoken, and each of the company of emigrants was about to set out to seek a refuge, a home, in a new and to them unknown land. Thirty families had set out together, most if not all of whom were natives of Switzerland. They had sailed in the good ship Phoenix. Their Captain was John Spurrier. By their side had sailed two merchant vessels, which carried their cargo. They sailed from Rotterdam, and when three days out at sea a violent storm arose, and one vessel sank. In order to save the merchant vessels, they were lightened; among the goods consigned to the deep were the effects of Ulrich Engle. Some of the passengers leaped into the sea and swam to the merchant vessels, hoping to save their goods, but the ship's crew cut off their hands as they tried to climb aboard, and they fell back and perished.

During the voyage every infant in the entire company died and was buried at sea, save one, and that was the one that lay

in his mother's arms when the bereft mothers gathered about her at the final leave-taking already mentioned. Not only was "Jockeli" the only infant that survived, but he was by far the youngest of the company. And when the circumstances under which he was born, and the almost miraculous preservation of both mother and child were remembered, it was little wonder these grieving mothers gathered about Anna Engle and her little one, to cheer and bless them at the separation. One by one they extended the parting hand, and as they did so, expressed the firm belief that God had in store a great life work for the child, or he, too, would have died, as did theirs, on the voyage.

We next find Ulrich Engle and wife, with eight children, located in a reeking marsh at a point about two miles west of Marietta, Lancaster county, Pennsylvania, now known as "Wild Cat." Here a home was found, and here the father and mother and several children died and lie buried. "Jockeli," as he was lovingly called, was from infancy taught the doctrines of piety, as were all the children. At the age of twelve he united with the Mennonite church, but we find him much concerned about the salvation of his soul. At the age of eighteen, we are told, he was converted, after which he was much exercised about the mode of baptism. It will not be out of place, we hope, to say here that the Mennonites baptize by affusion, or pouring, and it seems "Jockeli" was not thoroughly convinced that this mode was the right one, hence his mental disturbance.

It might be of interest to state that "Jockeli"—or Jacob, as we should call him, for that was his name—was apprenticed to the weaver's trade at the age of fourteen, with a man by the name of Witmer, at Stackstown. After Jacob's conversion,

Witmer joined him in the belief that immersion was the right mode of baptism, and so they applied to Otterbein, who refused them, saying that, as they had previously been baptized, he could not conscientiously perform the ceremony in the form they desired. Next they called on the German Baptists, stating they desired baptism by immersion. When questioned as to their connections, it was learned that they did not desire to sever relations with the Mennonites, but simply desired baptism by immersion. Whereupon the Baptist preacher declined, because if he immersed them, it would become necessary for them to unite with that church. Engle and Witmer were now in a quandary. The Baptist bishop relieved them, however, by suggesting that the applicants baptize each other, as did their founder, Mack, in Germany. This seemed feasible, and so they agreed to do it at their earliest convenience, and they performed the ceremony between them, the stipulation being that neither one shall ever divulge which should be the one to baptize first. They kept their pledge, and it is not known to this day which was first to perform the ceremony. It is believed that the baptism took place in the Susquehanna, near Bainbridge.

Engle and Witmer upheld the doctrine of immersion and made it a subject of conversation with friends and neighbors. It was not long until some became like-minded, and finally there were twelve that expressed a desire to be baptized with Engle's baptism. A day was set apart for the service, Engle agreed to baptize the twelve. There was a large concourse of people present, some to mock, some curious, some friendly and ready to endorse the ceremony. When the twelve proceeded to the water, the friends of one of them ridiculed him, wondering whether "he, too, is going with the fanatics." This



proved too much for him, and he withdrew. The other eleven were, however, baptized. Among them were John Funk, of York County; Gnauss, Rohrer, Barbara Heisey, Lichty and wife, Barbara. The names of the rest are not known. After the ceremony they repaired to the home of Engle, and going into an upper room they held their first love feast.

Shortly afterward they met at the home of Henry Engle, about a mile west of Schock's Mills, at which meeting the Church was organized, and Jacob Engle declared bishop. From that time forward, the church grew and soon became a religious force in the neighborhood. These events took place about 1778-80, for Jacob Engle and Witmer did not baptize each other until seven years after Engle's conversion, which occurred in 1771.

A branch of this church sprang up early in Canada; it had a following in York county and in various other sections. Some of Engle's sisters married York county men and of course settled there, which may account for the faith taking root there. These York county brethren afterward became a distinct and separate church, as we shall see later on; but it may as well be said now, that the wing known as "Yorkers," are really the old order, for they preserve to this day the traditions of the early church fathers in the matter of dress, order of service, and place of worship. For it must not be overlooked that Engle undoubtedly prescribed, to a great extent, the "Forms" he advocated; for instance, the wearing of a full beard was allowed, but the mustache was to be shaved off. Gnauss, on the other hand, insisted on wearing a full beard and mustache, and we are told "he fell back from the faith."

The new church, while moving along in peace, and through zealous effort growing steadily, was destined to rupture. Engle died in 1832 and did not live to see the fruit of his labor broken by discord. Up to about 1850, their religious services were held in the homes of the members. Love feasts were held in barns, and provision was made for all who attended, both man and beast. No little trouble and labor did these meetings and love feasts occasion, as they grew larger and larger, year by year. It seems some of the brethren were more popular than others, for some reason, and when meeting-day came at their homes, the gatherings were unusually large. As the accommodations were more or less limited proportionally, the idea of holding services in a house specially set apart occurred to some. It was the development of this idea that split the church into three parts. Matthias Brinser, the silver-tongued orator of Dauphin county, was the first to suggest the building of a house, to be used for holding worship in only. Some of the brethren thought it would be a good thing, but others did not think so. After much debating, followed the rupture above stated. At a conference held at the house of John Engle, near Stackstown, in the year 1853, just one hundred years after the founder's birth, a stormy debate took place regarding Matthias Brinser's proposed building of a meeting-house, the session not adjourning until two o'clock in the morning. Brinser left the conference hastily, ignoring the counsel of the brethren, as one party said, while he declared he left so that he could reach home before the streams he had to cross were swollen too much. It had rained very heavily all day of the conference, and the weather conditions were not of that kind which would conduct to the peace and harmony of a religious conference where radical differences existed. At this conference the breaches

began to widen and the result of deliberations at that time are set forth in a statement, which was printed in German, and of which the following is a translation: "As there are many people who desire to know the cause of the separation of the River Brethren, I will endeavor to state it as fully as possible.

In the spring of 1853 some brethren of Dauphin county appointed a meeting to consider the building of a meeting-house, and as no objection was made thereto, they began to build a meeting-house in the vicinity of Matthias Brinser. The brethren in Lancaster county held a council meeting (Rathsversammlung) at Jacob Engle's, where it was resolved to warn them not to build the house. They wrote their agreement in the following words and sent it to Matthias Brinser:

Conoy Township, Lancaster County, May 16, 1853.

The peace of God and the love of Jesus we wish unto you, dear brethren, as a hearty greeting, We, the undersigned brethren, have taken counsel among ourselves concerning the building of a meeting-house, which has been undertaken in your vicinity, and we have agreed to make request of you that ye desist, for we believe that such a building will open a door to cause great injury and severe suffering to many brethren; we therefore ask of you in heartfelt love that you heed our loving advice.

Jacob Strickler, Christian Musser, Daniel Engle, David Stoner, John Engle, Henry S. Engle, John T. Gisch, Henry Engle, Joseph Lehman, Jacob Hostetter, Henry Musser, David Engle, Jacob M. Engle, Benjamin Musser, John N. Graybill, Daniel Grove, John B. Engle, J. B. Hoffer, Michael Hoffman, Isaac Hershey, Jacob S. Engle, Benjamin Martin, Jacob E. Crider, John Hostetter, Christian Hoffman, Jacob Grider.

Sometime in the summer of 1855 they held another council-meeting at John B. Engle's in Conoy township, and ex-

pelled Matthias Brinser and all his helpers in the following manner:

“This writing is to show thee, Matthias Brinser, that a decision has been reached in unity, that the advice which was given at Jacob Engle’s shall be carried out with thee; it says: ‘If he hear not the congregation, let him be as a gentile and publican.’ And thou hast not heard, therefore thou canst no longer be a brother, until it be made known and the congregation be dissolved of thee and the brethren who hold unto thee; and it has been determined that the congregation has failed in not carrying out, at the beginning, the advice which thou hast not heard.”

It appears that it was the sense of that meeting, that conference regretted they did not act earlier in the matter of excommunicating Brinser; the reason for this doubtless was that now the church was split into three divisions, whereas, if conference had excommunicated him at a former session, it would have been broken only in two. As it transpired then, so it remains today. Brinser built his house of worship, and Zion’s Children became an organic fact. York county could no longer “keep house” with Lancaster county, so an organization was effected there, and what was neither “Brinser” nor “Yorker” became “Brethren in Christ.” So the three organizations as they stand today, are, properly speaking, collectively the “River Brethren”—not because they baptized or do baptize in the river or at the river, but because their founder and his earliest followers were Mennonites, who as brethren lived at or near “the river,” while the main body was located more remotely from the river. Taken as a whole, they are among the best citizens of the Commonwealth. Quiet, pious, pure-minded, prosperous, happy, contented, peace-loving,

kind, simple, and plain, they exemplify in their lives the teachings of Christ and the Apostles to such a degree as to make them seem strange in the eyes of the world at large, who may more or less remotely come in contact with them.

It has been said that "History is but the lengthened shadow of a few men." The reverse is true in this case. Here we have a ray of light which focalizes in the heart of a pious mother. For prudent reasons the writer omits what might be interesting to know, but it will not be amiss to add that no mother can tell what results may flow from the emotions in her soul. Anna Engle obeyed the voice of conscience and thousands today are happy in the living of the faith formulated by her son, not knowing the genesis of their joy. She did not live to see her son's work. She may never have dreamed he would become the founder of a church. His life-work is the throb of a mother-heart, and the church as a whole, as well as the communities where it flourishes, may well arise and call her blessed.

NOTE—We are indebted to the late Veronica Engle-Berg-Eyer, granddaughter of Jacob Engle; Elizabeth Hull, daughter of Sarah Meredith, who was a domestic in Ulrich Engle's family; Reverend Eli M. Engle, Newtown; Martin Musser, Rapho; and others for data. We believe what they have contributed is trustworthy.



## EXHIBIT VI

## CLAIMS OF AUTHORITY

*Article of 1936 by John K. Miller*

When one ventures to offer a statement concerning a historical matter that is shrouded in almost profound obscurity, totally lacking any official record, he should be willing to disclose the source of the information he has to offer to the interested hearer or reader, as the case may be, as a basis, and his right to claim that any merit resides in the statements he is about to make, for the consideration of those he is addressing. So one who is interested in an organization that has been to him the spiritual solace, comfort and joy, that the River Brethren Church has been to thousands, can fail to be interested also in the origin of that organization. For will anyone who has attempted to trace her history to her origin, deny, that he has been confronted with an obscurity bordering on the loss of every trace of information leading to it, before proceeding very far. For, it appears, as was the custom of those during the earlier days, there was no record made of any of their acts, no matter how important they may have been.

In this dilemma there is but one thing to do, and that is to give due consideration to tradition. Anyone who has had to do with historical matters, knows that not all tradition is truthful, and reliable, and it becomes the duty of a "listening" historian to learn to discriminate between the true and the reliable, and the untrue and not reliable.

Owing to the total absence of any official record of the organization of the River Brethren, it becomes necessary to seek out threads of information and weave them with pains-

taking care into a fabrication that will be accurate and interesting and of a pattern simple and so easily understood, that it may at once be accepted as unquestionably correct. Just this the writer has striven to do. The little threads ferreted out and stored up, which led to this brief account were gathered bit by bit, covering years of patient research.

Probably most of the members of the River Brethren church, have been told that through the religious experiences and activities of Jacob Engel many years ago, it came into being; but who was Jacob Engel, where and when did the things transpire that led to the organization of the church,—all is shrouded in obscurity, and not one official record to refer to, and those who knew have passed away.

One method of unraveling the mystery remains to us at this date, (and even this may at any moment share the same fate that befell the others) and that is, by assembling reliable traditions into a harmonious whole, and fortunately the custodian of the account of several old ladies,—one a granddaughter of Jacob Engel, who in her time, was regarded by all the Engel Family as final authority on historical matters of the early Engels, and of the River Brethren church. This, I here offer, to all interested.

As so often stated, there were no official records kept of the founding of the church, but we do have an official record of the coming of the Ulrich Engel family, of whom Jacob Engel was an eleven months old (the youngest of the family) infant and the only infant to survive the ninety-day voyage of peril and hardship, which was regarded by the mothers bereft of their loved ones who had died and were buried at sea, as an omen that Almighty God had some important work for him to do in His cause, or he, too, would have died.

This official record is the starting point of our date findings. Our authority, Mrs. Veronica-Berg-Engle told the writer that "Jacob was an infant—less than a year old when he came to America." The record shows that the ship landed in the American ports at Philadelphia, Oct. 1, 1754. An old Family Bible has this record: "I, Jacob Engel was born in the year Anno Domini 1753, November 5th, and was married to Frany or Veronica Schock in the year 1773, May 3rd, in the 20th year of my life." Here are valuable clues accurate beyond questions that we may use to establish our account.

The granddaughter of Jacob, "Frany" Engel-Berg-Eyer referred to, stated that "at the age of fourteen Jacob united with the Mennonite church, and was bound out to learn the weaving trade to a man, by the name of Funk, (who had a shop at Stackstown, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, about three miles northward from the Engel homestead at Wild Cat,) during the same year, by his guardian, Jacob Schock. Jacob was much interested in the religious work of Otterbein and Boehm, and the great spiritual awakening that was then in progress throughout Lancaster County, and by the time he had reached the age of eighteen, he, had a more definite experience in the deeper Christian life than he had hitherto enjoyed. This led to the deeper study of the subject of baptism.

At this time one of the daughters of his guardian, (Veronica) looked with favor upon young Jacob, and when he reached nineteen years of age, the couple were married, and Jacob established a business of his own, beginning with a loom his father-in-law had given him.

During the six years following the marriage, he became convinced that immersion was the only true mode of water-baptism, a conviction which was shared by a man named

Witmer. After various experiences, the two agreed to baptize each other which took place when Jacob was twenty-five years of age. Neither one would ever tell which of the two was first to perform the ceremony—an agreement they had made before they undertook the service, and which was inviolately kept. Neither was it ever known just where it took place.

During the next seven years following both men, (Jacob especially) were actively impressing upon others the faith they held when twelve people requested baptism by immersion, asking Jacob Engel to perform the ceremony. A day was appointed for the service and when the time arrived to proceed to the river, friends of one of the twelve chided and taunted him (or her) and the candidate withdrew. Following the ceremony the little company retired to the home of Jacob Engel, and there communion was observed. Not very long thereafter they met, and organized into the body known ever since, as the "River Brethren"—in the year 1785.

## EXHIBIT VII

## CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF JACOB ENGLE

The items starred are recorded facts; the other items are well founded traditions according to Mr. Miller.

*Born in Switzerland	1753
*Came to America	1754
United with Mennonites	1767
Bound to Funk to learn weaving trade	1767
*Converted at eighteen years of age	1771
*Married at the age of nineteen	1773
Witmer-Engel Baptism at twenty-five	1778
Baptized, Church founded	1785
Died at the age of seventy-nine	1833

These data came to me through Mrs. Hull, who received it from her mother, who lived during her maidenhood with the widow of Ulrich Engel, who was a brother of Jacob Engel, founder of the River Brethren Church, and was confirmed by Veronica Engel-Berg-Eyer, granddaughter of Jacob Engel, founder of River Brethren Church.



EXHIBIT VIII

*Samples of Early Conference Minutes*

COUNCIL MINUTES OF 1877

(Council held at Brother David Nisslys).

ARTICLE 1ST    Concerning brother Rothrock of Virginia, wishing to come back to Pennsylvania: Decided, that he shall remain for the present; and a contribution to be made to supply his wants and given or sent to Brother John Cassel of Lower Providence, Montgomery Co., Pa.

ARTICLE 2ND    Concerning the election of brethren to office in the church; whether it is allowed to ordain more than was previously decided. Decided that the brethren shall proceed as previously decided, and when two are equal shall be decided by casting lots.

ARTICLE 3RD    Whether it is allowed for a brother or sister to keep her inheritance or take the \$300 law when their debts are unpaid. Decided, not allowed.

ARTICLE 4TH    Is it allowed for a member to be in the life insurance.    Decided, not allowed.

ARTICLE 5TH    Has the church any special ceremony or confession of faith in taking up in the church.    No special form: but to exercise as near as that practiced by the old brethren who founded the church and in accordance with the word of God.

ARTICLE 6TH    Whether it is thought expedient to buy a place for worship in Harrisburg.    Decided: in favor of buying a place and a committee appointed to locate it, and make arrangements.

ARTICLE 7TH About helping brother Samuel Strauser. Decided: that he shall have help through a free donation.

ARTICLE 8TH Desired that the church should express its sentiments in reference to the use of tobacco among the brethren, and especially among the ministering brethren. Decided: not consistent and considered as an evil among the members and especially the ministers, and are earnestly admonished through the brethren in council to quit the evil as much as possible.

ARTICLE 9TH Whether the matter in reference to the reunion of the church with the part of or division known as Brinser brethren was carried out according to the decision of the council of last year (1876) in Ohio. Decided: that it was carried out to the satisfaction of the brethren.

ARTICLE 10TH About brother William Asherman's affairs: whether the brethren are willing to pay his debts or not. Decided: not under any obligations.

ARTICLE 11TH Concerning helping a ministering brother in Wayne Co. Ohio who sustained loss. Agreed that \$100 of his debts shall be paid from Pennsylvania, and \$100 by the West. The brother being poor and a ministering brother.

ARTICLE 12TH Concerning brother Lewis Sheaffer. Decided: he shall have help. Pennsylvania to make up \$50, the West according to their views.

ARTICLE 13TH About sending ministering brethren to the Mennonite settlement in the far west. Decided: in favor of sending brethren to visit them.

ARTICLE 14TH About holding love feasts in Iowa. Whether the brethren there are allowed to held love feasts without dinner the last day. Allowed.

ARTICLE 15TH Can any be taken up in the church who were divorced or separated, and married again and living with their second companion while the first is living. Decided: not allowed.

ARTICLE 16TH Concluded that the next annual council shall be held at Daniel Harle's in Montgomery Co., Pa. R. R. Station Royersford on the Reading R. R.

ARTICLE 17TH The missionary board proceedings reported and approved, and the following ministering brethren appointed subject to call. John Cassel, Lower Providence; Samuel Bucks, Annville, Pa.; Jacob Engle, Bainbridge, Pa.; David Engle, Mt. Joy, Pa.; John Gipple, Mastersonville; George Wenger, Fayetteville, Pa.; Noah Zook, Shippensburg, Pa.; Jacob Eisenhauer, Elizabethville; Andrew Bossler, Martinsburg, Pa.; T. A. Long, Howard, Pa.; Jacob E. Mishler, Ohio; Benjamin Brenner, Maddisonburg, Ohio; Lewis W. Sheaffer, West Milton, Ohio; Henry Shirk, Shannon, Ill.; Samuel Rice, Disco, Ill.; Jacob Cromer, Aurora, Ill.; Isaac Trump, Polo, Ill.; Joseph Fike, Dysert, Iowa.

ARTICLE 18TH About sending brethren to Kansas for the purpose of electing brethren for deacons and ministers, if thought necessary. Decided brethren shall be sent. The brethren who visit the Mennonite Settlement shall attend to the above.

ARTICLE 19TH Decided that Bro. Isaac Hershey shall be the corresponding brother to arrange love feasts for the coming year.

ARTICLE 20TH Concerning members who need help from the church. Decided: that the brethren are advised that each district shall provide for such who need help, and shall not

be brought before the general council unless too heavy for the brethren of such districts.

### COUNCIL MINUTES OF 1881

MET IN THE BRETHEN'S MEETING-HOUSE, RINGGOLD,  
WASHINGTON CO., MD., MAY 18TH, 1881, AND ORGANIZED BY  
ELECTING MODERATORS AND SECRETARIES.

ARTICLE 1ST. Will the Brethren allow members to attend boarding or high schools?

ANSWER By permission of the Church in District.

ARTICLE 2ND Missionary report given and approved.

ARTICLE 3RD What is the Standing Committee's authority or duty when called upon?

ANSWER Referred to Article 6, Minutes of 1878.

ARTICLE 4TH On what points of the Gospel shall the Ministering Brethren be examined before the laying on of hands?

ANSWER Referred to Article 13, Minutes of 1878.

ARTICLE 5TH Resolution of 1880 concerning a Periodical discussed.

ANSWER Deferred to some future Council.

ARTICLE 6TH How does the Church stand in regard to the publication of a Periodical?

ANSWER Fourteen Districts against, Nine in favor, Michigan, Southern Illinois and State of Kansas not reported.

ARTICLE 7TH How does the Church view the partaking of Intoxicating or Fermented Liquor?

ANSWER That it is the sentiment of the Conference Meeting that the use of intoxication liquors is a dangerous evil, sustained apparently by large monied interests, and we urge our members in every way to abstain from its use as a beverage, and earnestly urge our Brethren to use their influence in every way consistent with the Word of God.

ARTICLE 8TH Is it not the duty of the Brethren and Sisters in the several districts to encourage to bear the expenses of holding protracted meetings?

ANSWER It is their duty.

ARTICLE 9TH Is it consistent with the Word of God to ask a Brother to make a public confession?

ANSWER The Brethren have always considered it so, and do yet.

ARTICLE 10TH Have the Brethren a right to engage in the board of trade?

ANSWER They have not.

ARTICLE 11TH *Resolved*—That the General Council consider whether it would not be expedient and for the general good of the Church, that the Council select and appoint Brethren to make a general visit throughout the Brotherhood, for the purpose of unity and oneness in the Church?

ANSWER General Council has appointed the following Brethren: Bro. Samuel Zook and Bro. Jesse Engle for the State of Kansas; Bro. Henry Davidson, Bro. Levi Lukenbach and Bro. Joseph Hearshey, for the Western and Middle States; Bro. Samuel Bucks, Henry Engle, and Jacob Hostetter, Sr. for the Eastern, Northern and Southern States; Bro. Peter Rhodes, Bro. Abraham Wenger, and Samuel Snyder for Ontario, Can.



ARTICLE 12TH Bro. Jacob M. Engle was re-elected member of the Standing Committee for five years.

ARTICLE 13TH *Resolved*—That the Delegates from the several districts shall not leave until affairs are finally concluded.

ARTICLE 14TH Shall the three Brethren elected at the Council of 1880 to attend to the excursion arrangements with R. R. Co's be continued?

ANSWER Decided by rising vote they shall.

ARTICLE 15TH *Resolved*—That the decisions of the different Councils since 1871 be revised and printed, and Bro. Henry Davidson be appointed to carry out above resolution.

ARTICLE 16TH *Resolved*—That the next Annual Council will be held at Brubaker's Meeting-House, Lancaster Co., Pa. commencing on the 3rd Wednesday of May, 1882. Nearest R. R. Stations—Mt. Joy on Penna. R. R. and Manheim on the Reading and Columbia R. R.

## EXHIBIT IX

## MUSEUM

This is not a collection of antiques only. As the years pass by, old articles used by members of the Church are destroyed when they might have been preserved. The idea of preserving some relics of the past came to your author. These relics give to the rising generations a better idea of articles used than can be accomplished by the written page. It is hoped that the collection will be enlarged as the Church becomes better acquainted with the idea. The College has no room at present to store these museum articles. They are now cared for by your author. Provision is made for a proper transfer to the College and the Church. Any one willing to add to the collection may do so in their family name.

Many relics that have been lost would be of great value. For many years in a Franklin County home, a saddle which was used to ride to Canada and back was preserved. Finally the younger generation thought it was no use preserving it any longer so they destroyed it. In Lancaster County, a family destroyed an old tallow lantern made of tin punched full of holes for the circulation of air. As yet a lantern of this type has not been obtained. Cloth articles are rather hard to keep, but some should be preserved. A large cape overcoat would be of interest. Various styles of men's hats and women's bonnets have value. A large number of canes could be preserved in memory of the users. Other suggestions are dishes, crockery, a pair of the old-fashion red top high boots, spinning equipment, certain old books, some old clocks, old measuring vessels and the like. Those interested in having articles preserved write to Messiah Bible College or

the author of this book and inquire if the item would be accepted.

This is a list of some of the articles already on hand. Anvil, bell, Bibles, bonnet, bowl, butter mold, bees wax, bird house, broad ax, brace and bit, brick mold, a bridle bit, band saw, bedstead, and buttons. The one Bible was the family Bible of George Detwiler. It contains a complete record of his family. The other Bible is a German translation based on Luther's famous German translation. This last mentioned Bible was used for many years in the Ringgold Church in Maryland as a part of the speaking table equipment. The slat bonnet was one worn by Peter Winger's wife of near Stevensville, Ontario. The brace and bit was the property of Nicholas Michael of Sherkston, Ontario. The brick mold was used to make home-made brick in Franklin County, Penna.

Another group of articles on hand are communion cups, charm string, cradle, chests, crocks, sickles, coffee grinder, cow bell, cherry seeder, chairs, candle holder, candle snipper, candle molds, candle lantern, oil lamps and lights, and canes. These communion cups are a replica of the wooden chalices used in some of the congregations. The charm string is made of a variety of different buttons. The old-fashioned cradle as used by members of the Church was obtained in the vicinity of Grantham. The tin candle holders are from the Ringgold Church and were used earlier to light the building. The candle lantern is enclosed in glass rather than one of the tin type. A number of canes from Canada and United States are in the collection. They were used by members and given in remembrance of them. The names are Avery Long, Michael Musser, John Myers, Abram Winger, and David Climenhaga.

The collection contains a deed, flax, feather duster, goblets, gourd, hymn book, hat, hat boxes, hat rack, hat brush, handkerchief, hooks, hatchel, hammers, and an ink well. The hat is one of the high silk type and was worn by a member when he was a young man. The hooks came from Lancaster County and were used by early members. The hatchel is an instrument of many sharp spikes which was used to strip the heads off the flax in preparation for making linen. The hammers are home made ones. The deed is of sheepskin and is the first deed issued on land including a part of Grantham.

Kettles, kaleidoscope, linen, meat cutter, medicine bottles, name plates, nail cutter, picture frames, settee, plates, pepper shaker, potato masher, pipe, powder horns, plane, peck measure, pump, and trousers. One of the kettles is brass. The kaleidoscope was used for entertainment. The meat cutter is hard wood which was used to pound and cut meat. The one picture frame is made of many small pieces of wood uniquely fitted together. The settee was owned by D. Frank Kipe, and is decoratively painted. The powder horns are cow horns with gun powder in them such as were used to reload muzzle loading guns. The one was used by William Keen, a brother to Mrs. Conrad Z. Hess who gave the article. The pump is one of the old wooden type. The trousers are the type worn by older men in the Church.

There are also a rocker, song book, shoe box, spoons, spice can, sausage stuffer, spittoon, snuff box, scales, saddle, sleigh bells, slate hammers, skirts, skirt hoops, tar bucket, watch, watch chain, a will, wedge, and a work bench. The rocker is one with an enlarged arm on which to write. The scales is one from the S. R. Smith noodle factor of Grantham. The saddle is one well preserved and was used by Daniel Hollinger's

girls of near Waynesboro, Pennsylvania. The skirt hoops are from an old hoop skirt as used in earlier days. As far as is known these skirts were not worn by members of the Church. They were worn by members' children before conversion. The tar bucket made of wood is a sample of the provision made to keep the wooden axles from screaming on trips through the country. These buckets were carried along and were fastened to the wagon by a leather strip for a handle. The work bench is one of the heavy wooden type so much used in home carpenter shops.



## EXHIBIT X

## QUESTIONNAIRES

Three questionnaires were used in collecting some of the history of the Brethren in Christ Church. The first one was sent to each district. The second was sent to home mission stations. About twenty years after the first questionnaire was sent to the districts, a second one was sent.

QUESTIONNAIRE NUMBER ONE. A letter accompanied this questionnaire explaining the reason for wanting the information requested. The main reason given was the value of retaining for future generations the history of the Church. An urgent appeal was made to find the best answer possible to each question.

- I.
  - a. Who were the first members who lived in the district?
  - b. Give the full name and address of these members.
  - c. From where did these members move?
  - d. Tell what you can concerning the settling of these first members.
- II.
  - a. Who was the first Overseer in the district?
  - b. Give the date when he received this office.
  - c. Name in order all Overseers installed since.
  - d. Mention those who were outstanding in their work and explain what they accomplished.
  - e. Give interesting characteristics concerning the Overseers and statements they were noted for using.
- III. The same questions asked concerning Overseers were asked about Ministers and Deacons.

- IV. a. Where are the first Overseer, Minister, and Deacon buried?  
Give the name of the cemetery and the nearest post office address.
- V. a. Where was the first love feast held in the district?  
b. Did the district ever hold love feasts in barns?  
If so, when did the district discontinue this practice?
- VI. a. When and where was the first Church building built?  
b. Has any major change been made in the building?  
If so, explain the change and give the date it was made.  
c. What other church buildings are in the district?  
d. When were they built and what changes have been made later?  
e. Were the buildings built on land formerly owned by a member of the Church?  
f. Was the land donated or purchased?  
g. If donated, by whom?  
h. Is the deed to the property clear?  
i. If not, what is the nature of the deed?  
j. What is the name of the road or street on which the Church is located?  
k. What is the nearest railroad station from the Church?  
l. What is the present value of the Church property in the district?
- VII. a. When and where was the first Sunday School started in your district?  
b. Who was the first superintendent?

- c. Explain the effort it took to start the Sunday School.
  - d. When was the first Sunday School convention held?
- VIII. a. Give the names of those who have gone into mission work from the district.
- b. Give the dates they entered the work and the fields of labor.
  - c. When was the first missionary meeting held in the district?
- IX. a. When did the district take up the first offering for foreign mission work? For home mission work? For orphanage work? For educational work?
- b. Give the history of the various methods of collecting money for Church work such as giving to the deacons, signing a paper, passing plates in the services, and a box at the door.
- X. a. Give the dates and a brief account of the largest revivals in the district.
- b. Where were they held?
- XI. Give an account of the harvest meetings in the district.
- XII. a. Does the district have Bible readings?
- b. When did they start?
  - c. How successful have they been?
  - d. When was the first Bible Conference held?
- XIII. a. Do you have Young People's Meetings?
- b. If so, when did they start?
  - c. Who was the first superintendent of Young People's work?
  - d. How successful has this work been?

- XIV. a. Did the district ever use tables during communion services?  
b. If so, when did the practice end?
- XV. a. Have the requirements for membership changed?  
b. What have been the changes in the standards of dress?
- XVI. a. When was sanctification first taught as an experience?  
b. Who started the teaching in the district?
- XVII. a. Did the district ever object to the use of spring wagons, top buggies, and automobiles?  
b. When did the first automobile come into the district?
- XVIII. When did the first musical instrument come into the district?
- XIX. Give any interesting or valuable information which you think should be remembered.

### QUESTIONNAIRE NUMBER TWO

- I. When was the mission started?
- II. a. Was the work started at the present location?  
b. If not, where was the work started?  
c. How long a time was the work carried on at each location?  
d. Why was the mission station moved?
- III. What was the size of the work when at first started?
- IV. What was the value of the property when the work first started?

- V.      What is the value of the property at present?
- VI. a. Does any one person deserve the credit for starting the work?
- b. If not, how was the work started?
- VII. a. Did the work ever look as though it would have to be closed on account of lack of workers or finances?
- b. If so, explain the condition.
- VIII.    Who are the present workers?
- IX.      Give an account of those who have made the greatest sacrifice for the work.
- X.       Explain the location of the mission in detail.
- XI.      Give any history concerning the work which you consider of value.

THE SECOND QUESTIONNAIRE TO DISTRICTS. This was a valuable check against the questionnaire sent earlier. A letter accompanying the questionnaire asked for as complete information as possible. Considerable research was done by districts between the time of the first questionnaire and this one.

#### *I. Church Buildings*

- a. Give names of churches in the district.
- b. Give date of building.
- c. Is the building brick or frame?
- d. Give remodeling dates.

#### *II. Overseers*

- a. Give the names of all the Overseers who have served the district.
- b. Give the date of birth of each one.



- c. Give the date of ordination to the office.
- d. Give the date of death of each.
- e. Name the burial place.

III. *Ministers*

The information asked concerning Overseers was requested for ministers.

IV. *Deacons*

The information asked concerning Overseers was requested for deacons.

No attempt was made to list all the information received in the answers to these questionnaires. Such a listing would have been little more than a tabulation. This would have made a very monotonous history.

Verification was necessary for many of the answers received.

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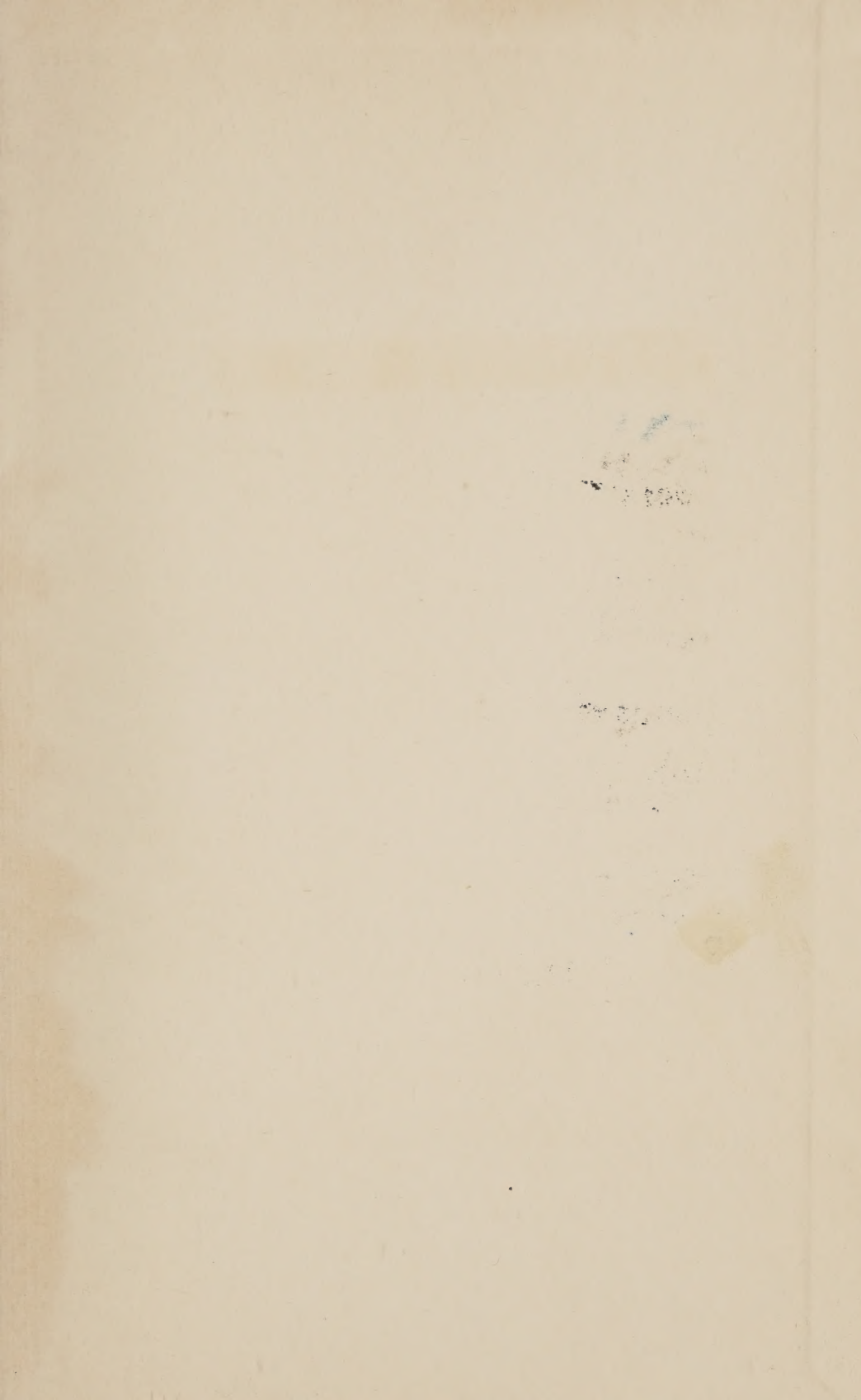
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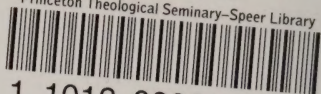




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